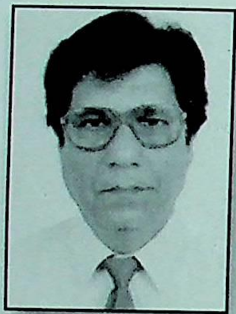
Back to the Vedas

MADAN RAHEJA

About the Author



Shri Madan Raheja was born on 10th December 1941 in Sakkhar-Sindh (now in Pakistan). His Father Shri Kishindas Lalchand Raheja (1906-1995) and mother Smt. Kalawati Kishindas Raheja (1914-1984) were one of the well-known royal families of Sindh. His mother tongue is Sindhi. His school education was in Sindhi (Pharsi medium), and after completing college education in Jai Hind college (Bombay) he got his higher education in Electrical and Mechanical Engineering in Kota (Rajasthan). Being a mechanical engineer, his profession is dress designing. He is famous for his artistic designs in Bollywood film personalities. He also possesses good knowledge of Urdu, Hindi and Sanskrit languages.

Shri Madan Raheja is a jolly-natured person. Because of deep interest in religious matters, he improved his basic knowledge about "**Dharma**" whilst listening various lectures of learned preachers of the Vedic Dharma as well as by deep study of the Vedic literatures. In a very short period of time, he started writing- interesting articles in "**Nishkaam Parivartan**" the monthly magazine of Arya Samaj Santacruz. The members of Arya Samaj and Pauranik people admire the style and language of his writings all over

Continued to flap 2

BACK TO THE VEDAS

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PRESENTATION

Presented to

Shri/Smt. ....

with love and respect.

....

BACK TO THE VEDAS

DIVINE-ORIGINAL-TRUTH

[An Authentic Guide to the Vedic Information]

Madan Raheja

VIJAYKUMAR GOVINDRAM HASANAND

First Edition

Madan Raheja

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About the Book

In this era of information and technology, Mr. Madan Raheja's book 'Back to the Vedas' serves a valuable digest providing authentic information on a number of subjects related to human life from birth to re-birth. The beauty of this information compiled by Mr. Raheja from the Vedas and other Vedic literature is that it is divine, original and full of absolute truths, which an intelligent reader cannot set aside. This is so because only the Vedas are unadulterated treasure-house of all true knowledge and wisdom, and the efficient cause of all true knowledge, and all that which is knowable through knowledge, is none other than God Almighty. The rationality of the information compiled in the book has been further reinforced by logical interpretations given in 'Upanishads', 'Darshan Shastras', the holy Geeta and the works of the great saints and philosophers, in particular Mahar'shi Swami Dayananda Saraswati. Mr. Raheja has made appropriate use of the information contained in the contemporary literature on various subjects.

The encyclopaedic treatment of various subjects, like *dharma* and *religion*, *god*, *soul* and *matter*, *karma siddhanta*, *Astrology* and *Astronomy*, *Vedic sanskaras*, *yoga and meditation*, *doctrine of incarnation*, *worship of god*, *goal of human life*, *vedic theories and beliefs*, *etc.*, in a self-contained manner makes the reading of the book more interesting and absorbing. Indeed Mr. Madan Raheja has very nicely simplified many baffling subjects for the upcoming generation in a most lucid, simple and easily

understandable language. Mr Raheja's analytical approach serves as very valuable and important guide to the mass of Vedic information and knowledge contained in the Vedas. Not only does 'Back To The Vedas' enlighten the reader but also dispels many superstitions and mistaken notions and can be regarded as an irreplaceable spiritual guide for one and all in every family and society for attaining peace, happiness and enlightenment.

Prof. P.L. Bhola

Dedication

*Fistly,*to One unlimited by time or space, to the Boundless, to Him, Who is all consciousness, to One, Who is the essence of self-contemplation and to the Supreme Peace and Light. I dedicate this an infinitesimal effort of mine to my Eternal Parampujya Dearest and Nearest Param Pita Paramatman **God.**

Secondly, to my heavenly abode mother, **Pujyaa Smt. Kalawati Kishindas Raheja** (13.04.1914—21.10.1984) and also to my heavenly abode father, **Pujya Shri Kishindas Lalchand Raheja** (23.01.1906—26.09.1995). Because of their everlasting love, guidance and blessings, I am able to write and present this book **Back to the Vedas** [an important guide to the *VEDIC* information] without facing any difficulty or obstacle. I dedicate this book to my dearest departed parents.

And *lastly* to my Respected **Pujya Rishivar Mahar'shi Swami Dayananda Saraswati** (1824-1883) [Founder of the Arya Samaj] whose guidance about the "Light of Truth" inspired me to distribute whatever knowledge I have acquired from the Holy Vedas and Aarsha Granthas. I dedicate my book **Back to the Vedas** [An Authentic guide to the Vedic information] to the divine souls of modern era.

—Madan Raheja

Contents

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Earlier the author has three books to his credit namely 1) **"Shanka Samadhan"** in Hindi, 2) **"Quest - The Vedic Answers"** in English and 3) **"Andhvishwas Nirmoolan"** in Hindi. **"Shanka-Samadhan"** was published in the year 1998 (with 131 Q/A., and more than 700 Vedic mantras for proofs) and its revised second edition was also published in the year 1999 that had a wide circulation all over the globe. The third edition of **"Shanka-Samadhan"** is under process and will be ready this year. Special thanks are also due to the management of **Darshan Yog Mahavidyala,** Arya van

Gujarat, who have decided to translate the book **"Shanka Samadhan"** into Gujarati language for the benefit of the Gujarati speaking people in India and abroad.

The need of the English version of **Shanka Samadhan** was felt for the Indians living abroad and those of non-Hindi speaking regions in India. The author's second book **Quest - The Vedic Answers** with requisite improvements and modifications done (with 161 Questions and Answers, and more that 1000 Vedic eloquent for references) and published with great success, which will serve the desired purpose for resident and non-resident Indians and English speaking people all over the world.

In his third book **"Andhvishwas Nirmoolan"** i.e. **"Superstition Exposed"** (Published in the year 2001) the author has exposed more than 150 superstitions that are believed and practiced, due to ignorance and selfishness of some people in our societies, in India and other parts of the world. English version of this long awaited book will be ready soon.

"Back to the Vedas" is the latest book to serve you as an important guide to the Vedic information. With fervent hope that if this book is able to persuade even a few persons to accept the teachings of the Vedas and to dedicate themselves for the service of the mankind in removing ignorance, doubts, indecisions, mistaken notions and so on, the author will consider his labour well rewarded.

The author has simplified many complex subjects for our learned readers and especially for the modern generation in a simple and understandable language. Moreover this book **"Back to the Vedas"** is beautified in a the Vedic eloquent (mantras) and other authoritative references from many A'rsha literatures for the readers' convenience.

May God bless and inspire us to work for preaching of

truth in accordance with the Vedas and do all we can for the well being of the humanity at large.

Any comments or suggestions from learned readers for its improvement will be thankfully accepted and judiciously considered. Lastly we solicit generous co-operation from our dear readers and friends.

The problems of the world will be easily solved if and when the people follow the Universal Law of Mother Nature and abide by God's revealed instructions.

Author's next books are - **"Peace of Mind"** (English), **"Vedon Ki Vaani-Santon Ki Zubani"** (Hindi), **"Paakhand Khandini Pataka"** (Hindi).

Real happiness lies in the peace of mind which can be had only on attaining God.

In the service of humanity

—Madan Raheja

Preface

Dharma of mankind is "Humanity" also simply known as "Righteousness" but in real sense many of us do not know the meaning of righteousness or Dharma. Otherwise all creatures except man perform their duties accordingly. Then why not man? Of course this question may have to arise in human mind because man has intelligence to think and gain all true knowledge to develop his "Art of living" and to be happy in his life.

Human beings are said to be the most superior creatures in this Universe because only they have intellect and freedom of "Karma" i.e. action and to get the fruits of the same in the form of rewards (Pleasures) or punishments (Pains). Also one can visualize God only when he/she is in human form.

Dharma meaning eternal righteousness, rule of law, ethical conducts and so on flow from the ideals and principles outlined in the Vedas. Hinduism has no founder or prophet but there are common grounds, which most Hindus accept. One of them is that the purpose of religion is to take the individual through a gradual process to a higher and higher, or deeper and deeper awareness, ending finally in liberation of the soul from all bondage.

All sacred scriptures state the same thing that Humanity is the only "Dharma" of all mankind but in the shadow of ignorance people have given many different names, in different period of time, in different circumstances and according to their own needs and beliefs. These man-made new names which are so-called "Religions" are actually Sects such as Hinduism, Muslim, Sikhism, Christianity,

Buddhism, Jainism, Taoism, Judaism, Bahai etc. Also in these so-called religions there are many more differences. For example in Hindu religion, there are Shivait, Vaishnavi, believers of many different Deities. (Hindus believe in 33,00,00,000 deities) and still these deities are increasing day by day.

These differences always expand as of differences in thoughts of different people all over the globe because of their residential tendencies i.e. "Sanskaaras". This difference among people creates more differences, which results in abuses, street-fights, arsons, and disturbances in nation and spreads all over, which ends in wars between two countries or many more countries of this small planet called the world. War is no solution to anything. The only solution to these problems is to acquire all true knowledge revealed by God.

No man is complete or perfect and can never be the same because he has limited intellect and so he always commits mistakes due to ignorance. Truth always remains truth and all believe in truth. To accept truth and renounce falsehood is acceptable to all.

What is truth is truth! But how to decide and distinguish between truth and false? For this purpose one has to study the Vedic Philosophy and literature as the Vedas are the Word of God revealed in the beginning of the Universe. The Veda means Knowledge, thus the Vedas are the books of Knowledge, so the Vedas (Knowledge) belong to all human beings irrespective of caste, creed, colour, race and so on. They cover all aspects of the human existence. They cover everything for the benefit of all human-beings, such as knowledge of trinity (God, Soul and the Matter i.e. material cause of the Universe).

The main theme within the Vedas is to provide correct knowledge to all human-beings to realise themselves and to visualise the Divine Being, to attain salvation from all

wordly miseries and pains.

The most known Veda is the Rigveda. It is the largest containing 10,589 Mantras (Hymns). It is considered the Veda that deals with knowledge. The Yajurveda deals with action. One can also find reoccurrence of the information found in the Rigveda; but in different words and context. The Samaveda deals with the glorification and worshipping of God. The Atharvaveda deals with all the three principles.

All human-beings are equal, as we all are children of one God who is our real Father, Mother, Brother as well as our Friend. He is our real Teacher, Justice, and Knower of everything who is Omnipresent, Omniscient, Omnipotent and Creator of the whole Universe. Everyone has the fundamental right to study and teach the Holy Vedas and make his/her life peaceful and pleasant.

The chief object of writing this book is to bring forth the correct interpretation of the Vedic Scriptures in vogue. An effort has been made to prove what is true and expose what is false. The Holy Vedas are written in the 'Deva-Vani' (Divine Language) i.e. the Sanskrit language and most of us have not studied this holy language which is the main reason why we really do not know about the Vedas. Many impartial philologists and linguists now unequivocally admit: "Sanskrit is the mother of all important languages of the world. It is the Divine language—the most regular language known, especially remarkable as containing the roots of the various languages of the world." God has revealed full knowledge (according to the full capacity of soul's absorbency and with that knowledge he/she can realise oneself and get liberated from all evils and get emancipation). No one can feel his culture to be complete without an acquaintance with the Vedas.

In to-day's world, most factionalists have adopted such a distorted form of God, Worship of God, Religion,

Meditation and many topics related to religious rituals etc. that the ordinary or even intelligent people have no other choice but to accept and follow it.

What is Dharma? Briefly, the duties and responsibilities of a person regarding his own self, his family, society, country and the world are called Dharma according to the Vedas.

Dharma i.e. Religion is a matter of experiencing the self and bliss of God. Merely by becoming a member of any organisation, creed or sect, a person cannot be entitled to this experience. By reading any number of religious and sacred books and scriptures he cannot obtain this divine experience. Spiritual realization is a question of individual effort and struggle. The man of Dharma when he is on the path is mainly concerned with his own internal journey for attaining eternal peace and emancipation.

Hence it is the prime duty of all noble persons (Aryans) to study and to teach the Holy Vedas. To serve all is "Humanity" and that is why the need of a popular compilation is felt urgently. Thus the need for **Back to the Vedas**.

The Vedas teach us to become human! Man is recognised by his/her nature, characters and attributes. Of course, we all look like human beings but when we examine ourselves then only one recognises himself/herself. The Veda says—"**Manurbhava**" (**मनुर्भव**), it means, "Be a human being i.e. a noble man" and "**Krinvanto Vishwamaryam**" (**कृणवन्तो विश्वमार्यम्**) which means, "Make the world full of Aryans". All human-beings are Aryans and all Aryans are humans. An Arya means a noble person. There is no bar or restriction of country, period, creed, sex or colour for the study of the Vedas. God says in the Yajurvedic mantra (10.2.81)—"I bestow this knowledge of the Vedas for all persons, similarly also preach it to all including the

Brahmans, the Kshatriyas, the Vaishya, the Shudras, servants, ladies and even persons lower than Shudras." Shudra means Anarya or non-Arya or ignorant people.

The author has chosen some selected mantras (hymns) from the Holy Vedas for reference, which are in the Prakritik i.e. natural and original text called Vedic Sanskrit or Dev Vani and has tried to explain their translation in simple and understandable English. I hope our learned readers will appreciate this effort. The treasure of Vedic knowledge is not reserved for some sects of people, on the contrary, it is open to all and for the benefit of mankind. So, everyone has the right of acquiring and adoring Vedic knowledge.

This small book is indeed to enable the general reader to have an idea of the Vedas without going through the voluminous works, already published on the subject. However, an effort has been made to put in a nutshell the most essential things, which are absolutely necessary for a student of Vedic literature to know.

Back to the Vedas concludes with a synopsis of the important doctrines of the Vedic religion. The contents of this book are divided in different titles according to its subjects, for the convenience of our readers to find out subjects of their interest.

I hope that, not only an average person, but a conscious reader too will find this book helpful in acquiring a taste for further study of the Vedas. I am indebted to the various Vedic scholars, particularly Pujya Swami Dayananda Saraswati (Founder of Arya Samaj), Pujya Swami Satyapati Parivrajak, Pujya Swami Satya Prakash Saraswati and many other modern Vedic scholars, whose works have helped me in preparing this treatise.

May the infinite God, Who is all truth, all-intelligence, all blissful and the innermost spirit of all, give success and completeness to this object of mine. May God bless all and

give us courage to embrace truth and renounce falsehood.

All-Creating God!
Kindly keep all evils away from us and let us attain whatever is beneficial to us. *Yajurveda 30/3*

OM ASATO MAA SADGAMAYA!
ओ३म् असतो मा सद्गमय!
O Omnipresent God! Lead us from untruth to truth.

OM TAMASO MAA JYOTIRGAMAYA!
ओ३म् तमसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय!
O Omniscient God! Lead us from darkness to light i.e. from ignorance to knowledge.

OM MRITYOR-MAA AMRITAM GAMAYA!
ओ३म् मृत्योर्माऽमृतं गमय!
O Omnipotent God! Lead us from death to immortality i.e. from bondage to emancipation.

—Publishers

Dharma and Religion

Dharma and Religion are being taken as synonyms. But if we try to understand their roots, nature and styles, they seem to be quite different from each other.

Religion

"Religion" is basically a Latin word. Its meaning according to the Oxford dictionary is " Belief in superhuman controlling power, especially in a personal God or Gods entitled to obedience and worship; expression of this in worship; particular system of faith and worship; things to which one is devoted; life under monastic vows".

The important things in religion are personal beliefs, personal God or Gods, Obedience, Way of worship or system of faith. All of these things seem to be personal and subjective matters. They may differ from person to person according to his own belief and conviction. No one is supposed to interfere in the belief of others, because faith and belief is the subject of personal freedom. It is not something to discuss openly or publicly.

Dharma

"Dharma" is a Sanskrit word, which is derived from the root 'Dhra'. Dharma means to hold or accommodate or possess or follow which is essential to survive in the world for an individual and society together with due harmony and consistency with the whole universe, without fail. Dharma is something suitable, relevant and worthy to act upon mentally

and physically for the pleasure for all. Opposite of Dharma is 'Adharma', which is not beneficial to anyone in any respect and hampers the peace, prosperity and progress of the society and the world.

The word "Dharma" has been used in various contexts in the Vedas, the Upanishads etc., such as virtue, merit, attribute, nature, quality, duty, law, right, righteousness, propriety etc. All noble qualities, thoughts and actions are included in Dharma according to Maharshi Manu, Maharshi Patanjali and others.

धृतिः क्षमा दमोऽस्तेयं शौचमिन्द्रि निग्रहः।
धीर्विद्याः सत्यमक्रोधो दशकं धर्मःलक्षणम्।

Dhriti Kshamaa Damo Asatyam Shouchamindriya-nigraha, Dheervidyaha Satyamakrodho Dashakam Dharma Lakshanam. *Manusmriti VI - 92*

Explanation :

1. Resolution, 2. Patience, 3. Self-restraint, 4. Non-stealing, 5. Purity, 6. Restraint of the organs, 7. Devotion, 8. Know-ledge (of the Vedas), 9. Truth and 10. Absence of anger.

These are the tenfolds of the Vedic Dharma or the right conduct of life for mankind.

Non-violence, Truth, Non-stealing, Celibacy and Non-possession are the main headings or principles of Dharma, Adharma is just opposite of Dharma.

Let us compare Dharma and Religion on the basis of their definition and their practical styles:

Dharma

1. Dharma is one since the beginning of creation.
2. There is no founder of Dharma in the form of a human being.
3. The principles are more important as they are made

by the Almighty, Omniscient, Omnipotent, and Omnipresent God, Who is perfect and creator of the universe.

4. The laws of Nature are the laws of Dharma, they are flexible and suitable to all at all times.
5. There is scope for improvement according to place, person and time.
6. All principles are based on science, truth and facts.
7. Principles and good conduct of Dharma make a person important and noble.
8. The principles are eternal i.e. unchangeable hence Universal (called "Ritta" in Sanskrit). So they are applied to all irrespective of time and place.
9. The principles are intended to do good to all and bad to none in all respects.
10. One can be Dharmic (Believer of Dharma) without the belief in any person or founders, simply by obeying the natural laws that govern life.
11. One can attain God directly without bringing any faith upon a messenger or a personal Guru.
12. Main aim of "Dharma" is to discover the true nature of God, soul and the matter in the Universe and how to harmonise and co-exist with each other. Being cognizant of the laws of Dharma and abiding by them makes the human thoughts and actions nobler. Dharma is alike for all humanity.

Religion :

1. Religions are many since the beginning of a man.
2. They are founded by human beings.
3. In religion person are more important than principles because these (principles) are made by them. The laws (code of conduct) made by men are imperfect because man is not Omniscient as the soul

is an Infinitesimal entity with limited knowledge.

4. The laws made by religious persons are the laws of the religions, they are rigid and not necessarily suitable to all at all times.
5. There's no scope for improvement according to the place, person and time.
6. All religious principles are based on their personal myths, belief and miracles.
7. Religious faith, laws and order make a person important and noble.
8. Principles are based on geographical and sectarian considerations hence they are changeable and differ with time and place.
9. The principles are intended to do good only to believers not to non-believers.
10. To be a religious person, one must bring faith and belief upon the founder person and undergo the ritualistic process.
11. One cannot attain God directly without bringing faith upon a messenger, a prophet or a founder of that religion.
12. Main aim is to convert people from one religion to another to gain more and more followers.

The Holy Vedas : Word of God

"The Vedas are as old as the world and yet they have not grown stale. The sun too has not grown old."

The Veda is divine, universal, highly rational and practical. The wisdom contained in the Vedas comes vividly alive in its soaring imagination, philosophical speculation, practical advice and moral inspiration. There are more than twenty thousand Mantras in four Vedas, tremendously rich in sweetness and melody, has a universal appeal for people of all times and all countries.

The term Veda comes from the root "Vid" i.e. to know. (Gothic 'wait', German 'Weiss' and English 'wit'—www). It means 'sacred knowledge'. The word Veda means Wit, Wisdom and Knowledge, and truly Veda is a Samhita of Wit, Wisdom and Knowledge and when applied to scripture it signifies the Book of Nature, the Book of Knowledge, the Book of Religion and the Book of Morals. Veda is the only book on earth, which deals with the "Brahma Vidya" or "Para Vidya" (esoteric or spiritual) as well as "Apara Vidya" (exoteric or worldly) sciences. Omniscient God reveals all true knowledge because He is Omnipresent and Omnipotent.

As said earlier, the word 'Veda' means 'Knowledge' and any knowledge means 'Veda'. The Vedas are regarded as the Original Guide to materialistic and spiritualistic "Art of Living". God has provided His Eternal Knowledge i.e. the Vedas, to mankind. The ultimate purpose of the Vedic literature is to establish knowledge of self-realisation plus

God-realisation for attainment of Salvation from the sufferings of the circle of birth, death and re-birth. To obtain emancipation is the prime goal and main purpose of man's life in the world.

In the Rigvedaadi BhashyaBhumika (Introduction to the commentary of the Vedas) Maharshi Dayananda Saraswati accepts that the scope of the Vedas is not limited to knowledge only but also covers the areas of Power, Gain and Meditation.

In the beginning of the creation, there was no system of teaching and learning, nor were there any books to read. Then how could men acquire knowledge? Thus, man not being independent in the matter of empirical knowledge, and innate knowledge alone being insufficient for the acquisition of knowledge, the only course left for him was to receive instruction from the primeval source of all knowledge—he the One who had created him.

The Vedas are the sources of eternal inspiration, as they are God's word and received by four great ancient 'Rishis' when God created this Universe. These four Rishis are—Agni, Vaayu, Aaditya, and Angira. The word 'Rishi' means a Seer (from Dris) to visualise with spiritual vision. Rishi can be called the mantra 'Drashta' or Seer of Mantras. Mantra means Thought. God has revealed the knowledge in their sub-conscious mind and the same was felt and heard by those ancient Rishis. Therefore, the Vedas are also called 'The Shrutis'. The Vedas are not a creation of the Rishis' mind but they are eternal knowledge which already existed and was absorbed by the Rishis because of their pure deeds and Pure Sanskaras. They are said to be spiritual discoverers not inventors of the Holy Vedas.

The Rishis transmit and distribute the eternal God's word and the intuitional experiences that they received to all people. The Samhita (full collections of Mantras) of the

Vedas are revelation hence they are self-authoritative as they are eternal.

The Vedas are the oldest book in the library of mankind. The Vedas are the fountainhead of all knowledge and spiritual philosophy of the mankind. The teachings of the Vedas are called the "Dharma". "The code of conduct for the mankind."

Sir Maxmullar believed that "the Rigveda is the most ancient book of the world. The sacred hymns of the Brahmans stand unparalleled in the literature of the whole world and their presentation might well be called miraculous."

The Vedas are the pillars of Vedic traditions. Being God's revelation the Veda is that divine knowledge which if one follows it, he can improve his worldly and heavenly life. The Vedas are the eternal treasurers of Knowledge and Science. They contain complete knowledge from dust to the Universe. One can acquire the complete knowledge of Dharma (religion), Spirituality, Astrology, Astronomy, Sociology, Psychology, Mathematics, Ayurveda, Medicine, Electricity, X-rays, Weapons, Economy, Politics etc. What is there in the Vedas is everywhere and what is not in the Vedas is nowhere. Because of self-knowledge the Vedas are self-illuminated. They are the eternal fountains of knowledge and art. They supply all true knowledge for the continuous upliftment of mankind, that is why Maharshi Dayananda Saraswati wrote "It's a prime Dharma (duty) of all Aryan (Noble & virtuous persons) to study the Vedas and to teach them to others".

The Vedas are not only the oldest scriptures in the world, on the contrary, they are also gems of the crown of literatures. *"Nahivedaat Param Shastram"*—There is no better literature than the Vedas. But the Vedas have remained a sealed literature to many of us because of their

expanse and comprehensiveness. In the present time when life is cut off from its ancient moorings it has become more difficult to study the Vedas. Even today, many people do not know, what the Vedas (the true Knowledge) are! That is the main reason why man is unhappy in his/her life. Lack of knowledge gives birth to blind-faiths and blind-beliefs, hence everyone is under the shadow of ignorance.

The Vedas are the word of God. In the Holy Vedas there is infinite knowledge. They are the pillars of light for mankind. The Rigveda is world treasure of knowledge.

The Vedas contain four types of knowledge, hence there are four Vedas namely—the Rigveda, the Yajurveda, the Samaveda and the Atharvaveda.

Whatever is in the Vedas is supreme; it is the self-luminous light, which needs no other light to establish its validity or identity; it is known as the Absolute Authority or self-evident testimony. All other literature comes under the category of *'Paratah Pramanah'*, that is, they are held in esteem or authority, in as much as they are in oppose to the Vedic texts. Such literature is deemed to have received light from the Vedas.

The Four Vedas

The Vedas have been traditionally four from the beginning. The whole of Vedic literature proclaims with one voice that the Vedas are four and names them all separately. Western scholars like Bloomfield, missed perhaps the popular phrase 'Trayi-Vidya', hold the view that Atharvaveda was a latter addition, as it was composed much latter than the other three.

The Rigveda is admittedly the oldest book in the library of the world. A mantra in the Rigveda says—

तस्माद्यज्ञात्सर्वहुतः ऋचः समानि जज्ञिरे।
छन्दांसिजज्ञिरे तस्मद्यजुस्तस्मादजायत॥

Tasmaadyagyaat Sarvahutah Richah Saamaani Jagyire, Chhandasi Jagyire Tasmaadyajustasmaadajaayata.

(Rigveda: 10-90-9)

If the Atharvaveda were a latter production, how could it be included in the Rigveda, which was an earlier production? The fact is that the expression "Trayi" actually denotes Veda's subjects put forth in three different styles— *Viz*. knowledge, action and devotion, offered receptively in poetry, prose and song.

The Rigveda deals with theories and experiments, while the process of preparing re-agents and apparatus is recorded in the Yajurveda. Yajna is a Vedic expression for what we call experimentation. The directions, that the Mantras embody are, therefore such as will enable us to perform scientific experiments which, when accomplished, communicate to us knowledge of the Laws of Nature. The Atharvaveda is also popularly known as *"Bhasajya Veda"*, as it mainly deals with the science of medicine. To talk of magic, witchcraft etc. in the Atharvaveda is misnomer and humbug.

1. The Rig-Veda : 'Rik' is a derivative from the root "Rich Stutau" (to praise) meaning one, which contains attributes. Functions and nature of all material objects is 'Rik", and the container of true knowledge is Veda. Man needs to know the attributes of the object first of all and hence this aspect has been enlightened first of all in the Rig-Veda.

2. The Yajur-Veda : The word 'Yajuh' is derived from the root "Yaj" which means worship of God, company of learned and noble persons and charity. Rig-Veda discusses the attributes of objects and the Yajur-Veda describes the procedure and knowledge of making their proper use.

3. The Sama-Veda : The word 'Sama' is derived from the root "Sho—Antakarmani"- The Rig-Veda has described the attributes of the objects and the procedure and knowledge of their proper use have been mentioned in the Yajur-Veda. The Sama-Veda mentions to what extent and upto what limit the objects will yield result. Mantras of the four Vedas are mostly in poetry and some in prose. The Sama-Veda mantras have the speciality of being sung musically.

4. The Atharva-Veda : Lastly 'Atharva' is derived from the root *"Tharvatishcharati-Karmaa"*. Whatever is left from the Rig, the Yajur and the Sama Vedas, has been described in the Atharva-Veda. It also describes how to preserve and protect and the doubts have also been discussed. *(Rigvedaadi Bhashyabhumika)*.

N.B. It is incredible that all mantras of the four Vedas have been numbered most systematically and thus their quantitative authenticity has been decided, so that an adulterated mantra cannot be introduced in any part of any Veda in the beginning, in the middle or at the end. Further letters of each mantra have also strictly been counted as per rules of metrics and not a single letter can be added or deleted.

The Vedic Mantras

All Vedic mantras are in condensed form with deep and different meanings according to the nature of subject and contents. Each and every mantra of the Veda can be understood from many point of views. There are many 'words' in the Veda-Vani usually known as the Sanskrit language, which have more than one meaning. Some of them have nearly hundreds of meanings, hence it is advisable to be cautious to study the Holy Vedas from a Vedic scholar, otherwise, one cannot understand the correct essence of a particular mantra. However, one must also be careful about

whom to approach to understand the Vedic teachings, which means not only which teacher you hear from, but also which translation of the Vedas you read. It is possible that authoritative quotes will result in misquotes. In present time, many Indian and foreign scholars have translated the Holy Vedas in almost all languages of the world, but still meanings of many verses of the Vedas differ from one another, because their commentaries on the mantras are different. It is essential to study the Sanskrit language first and then start studying the Vedas. One can directly study the Veda, if the same is translated by a known Vedic scholar only.

In Rigveda alone there are 10589[1] mantras.

1. The Rig-Veda is divided into 10 Mandalas (Volumes), 85 Anuvakas (Sections), 1028 Suktas and 10589 mambers.
2. The Yajur-Veda is divided into 40 Adhyaayas (Chapters) and contains 1975 Mantras.
3. The Sama-Veda is divided into 2 Arcikas, 27 Adhyaayas, 18 Khandas, 730 Suktas and contains 1875 Mantras.
4. The Atharva-Veda has 10 Mandalas (Volumes), 20 Khandas (Sections), 730 Suktas and contain 5977 Mantras.

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1. Some of the modern Vedic scholars have differences about the numbers of the mantras in the Rigveda as 10552. But, according to the greatest sage of modern era and founder of "The Arya Samaj" Maharshi Swami Dayanand Saraswati's calculation, in forewords of his Bhashya (commentary) on Rigveda, Volume 1. It shows the total number of the Rigveda mantras as 10589. Pujya Swamiji has advised all learned readers that "they must remember this number so that there will be no misunderstanding or confusion in future". Learned readers must appreciate that in this book we have taken Swamiji's calculation as correct and authoritative. If anyone has any objection about the number. he/she may refer the Bhashya on Rigveda written by Swami Dayanand Saraswati.

Thus the four Vedas together contain 10589 + 1975 + 1875 + 5977 = 20,416 Mantras i.e. Twenty thousand four hundred and sixteen mantras.

Readers will be amazed and surprised to know that total numbers of letters in the mantras of all the four Vedas are 8,64,000. i.e. eight lakh sixty-four thousand (Shatpath Brahmana: 10-4-2-23/25)

The Samhitas are in a language, which is different from the prevailing classic Sanskrit. The Vedic texts were revealed in the divinely revealed language, generally called 'Vedic Sanskrit' or 'Deva Vani'.

The Vedic literature

There are four Upvedas+ or Sub-Veda (here the word 'Veda' stands for education), under which comes six Vedangas (Limbs), six Upangas (sub-limbs), i.e. six school of thought propounded by seers and sages. Four Brahmanas and—the Vedas alone are held to be Divine in origin, the rest were made by Rishis—seers of the Veda and nature. There are ten Upanishads.

There are four Upavedas: 1. the Ayurveda or the medical scriptures; 2. the Dhanurveda or the science of archery; devastating weapon and missiles and diplomacy; and 3. the Gandharvaveda or the science of music; 4. the Arthaveda or the technological science.

There are six Vedangas[1] in number: —(i) Shiksha [Phonetics science of morals and duties]; (ii) Kalpa [Geometry]; (iii) Vyakarana [Grammar]; (iv) Nirukta [Etymology], (v) Chhanda [Metrics i.e. Philology]; and (vi) Jyotish [Astronomy and Astrology].}

1. Usually most people believe Vedanta means ending portion of the Veda, which is wrong. The real meaning of "Vedanta" is so called "Theory of the Vedas." Here 'Anta' stands for the theory and not for the end.

There are six Upangas (Darshanas): Purva Mimansa, Vaisheshika, Nyaaya, Yoga, Sankhya and Vedanta[2] Darshan. These are also popularly and commonly known as the six Schools of Indian philosophy. They have profound respect for the four Vedas. These philosophical system show that human mind soared to highest peak of the imagination.

As the Vedas were not easily understood by the people, the Brahmanas were written by the Rishis to elaborate and expound them. Thus the Brahmanas are mostly exposition of the Vedas with additional rituals and historical disquisition, connected with the teachings of the Vedas. The names of forty of the Brahmanas are known, but only sixteen of them have survived, including Aitreya, Shatpatha, Tandya and Gopatha. They are belonging respectively to the Rigveda, the Yajurveda, the Atharvaveda and the Samaveda. The other twenty-four are lost. Every Brahmana is attached to a particular Shakha of the Veda.

There are also ten Upanishads *viz*. Isha, Kena, Katha, Prashna, Mundaka, Mandukya, Aitreya, Taitreya, Chhandogya and Brihadaranyak. Upanishads, which deal with the spiritual science as well as physical science in some cases, are the offshoots of the careful examination of the Vedic verses.

Whatever is enjoined by the Vedas, is right, whilst whatever is condemned by them we believe to be wrong. Among the Smriti's, Manu Smriti alone is authoritative, the interpolated verses being excepted.

Divine Language

The fact remains that language and thoughts are inter-dependent. For there can be no thought without language and can be no language without thought. Language is the vehicle of thought. Even when we think without speaking, we think in words and sentences—generally in the mother

tongue. Words are the fortress of thought. Thinking and speaking are so united that one can distinguish them as internal and external. Language and intellect cannot be separated.

We thus arrive at the conclusion that even the language, in which the Vedas were revealed was also divinely revealed. Without language it is impossible to conceive philosophical, nay, even human consciousness. Similarly, every word and its meaning are also inseparable.

The Vedic language (Vedic Sanskrit) is so perfect that many impartial philologists and linguists now unequivocally admit that Sanskrit is the mother (neither aunt or sister) of all the important languages of the world. It (Vedic Sanskrit) is the Divine language or "Deva Vani"—the most regular language known, especially remarkable as containing the roots of the various languages of the world. At one time Sanskrit was the one language, spoken all over the world.

Shakhas or Teaching-Patterns of the Vedas

According to the Great Sage Gemini, writer of Meemansa Shastra (1-130), the teaching pattern is called "Shakha". Branch, part or division etc. are not the correct meaning of Shakha but these Shakhas are the pattern of teaching—the way of teaching,—the style of teaching of the Vedas.

It is written in the Mahabhashya-Karika (Ashtadhyayi 4-1-63) that Charan is meant for Gotra, here Charan means —the style of teaching. In short the branches of The Vedas mean the style/pattern of teaching and they are not division or tree-like branches.

According to the Mahabhashya, it is written that there are 1131 branches of the Vedas. In the Sarvanukrammi its number is 1130, in the Chakraviyuh its number is only 116. Maharshi Dayananda Saraswati has quoted the number of

the branches of The Vedas as 1127, in his immortal book "Light of Truth".

First it was the great sage named "Shaakal" who had taught the style of teaching of The Vedas. Shaakal is very ancient. By way of Mandalas—Anuvakas—Suktas, Shaakal has popularized his brand what is known as "the teaching of Shaakal". It is said that all other patterns of teaching (Shakhas) came in existence after Shaakal. Where there are Mandalas, Anuvakas, Sukta, they are known as Shaakal's literature.

Because of these Shakhas or the pattern of teaching, the Vedic mantras remain the same i.e. number of these eloquent verses remain the same and it can never be possible to make any addition or subtraction or alteration by any person. Hence the Vedas are eternal and 'Apaurushey' i.e. not made by any human, in other words the Vedas are the creation and knowledge of Omnipresent, Omniscient and Omnipotent God.

Authoritativeness of the Vedas

"The book in which God is described as He is Holy, Omniscient, Pure in nature, character and attributes, Just, Merciful, etc. and in which nothing is said that is opposed to the laws of nature, reason, the evidence of direct cognisance, etc., the teaching of the highly learned altruistic teachers of humanity (A'ptas), and the intuition of pure souls, and in which the laws, nature, and properties of matter and the soul are propounded as they are to be inferred from the order of nature as fixed by God, is the book of Divine revelation. Now the Vedas alone fulfil all the above conditions, hence they are the revealed books." [*Light of Truth:* VII]

Man is finite in knowledge of his surroundings where he stays and makes mistakes, hence cannot be perfect, because he is infinitesimal unity, whilst God is infinite, All-

pervading, Omniscient, so His knowledge—The Vedas are the only ATHORITATIVE AND TRUSTED by all. The Vedas being Divine in origin, are free from error and axiomatic (Swatah-Pramana). In other words the Vedas are their own authority, whilst other books are dependent upon the Vedas for their authority.

"As parents are kind to their children and wish for their welfare, so has the Supreme Benig, out of kindness to all men, revealed the Vedas by whose study men are freed from ignorance and error, and may attain the light of true knowledge and thereby enjoy extreme happiness as well as advance knowledge and promote their welfare."

[*Satyarth Prakash:* VII]

Since time immemorial, till the Great War of Mahabharata the scholars treated the Vedas as the repository of all true knowledge and interpreted them accordingly. If The Vedas had not possessed science the various scientific developments would not have taken place.

Great sage Vyasa, the author of the Vedanta Darshana unequivocally accepted this idea. Shri Shankaracharya comments in his Sutra "*Shastrayonitvat* (1-1-3)" —The Vedas are the scriptures of all true-knowledge. He attributes them with the adjectives *"Saravidyo-purinhita"* and "Sarvajnakalpa."

The great sage of modern era Mahar'shi Dayananda Saraswati confidently declared in his book "Rigvedadi-Bhashyabhumika" in which he collected some very conspicuous facts of science, "The Vedas are the scriptures of all true knowledge, is such a gift to mankind on his part that he deserves the gratitude of posterity."

There are many proofs in the Vedas that show that the Vedas are the books of Divine revelation.

The Yajurveda (31.3) explains that Agni = Rigveda (Glorification), Vayu = Yajurveda (Communion), Aaditya = Samaveda (Emancipation) and Angira = Atharvaveda =

Sacred word i.e. God's word.

तस्माद्यज्ञात्सर्वहुतः ऋचः समानि जाज्ञिरे।

Tasmaad Yajnaat Sarvahuta RrichahSaamaani jagyire *(Rigveda 10-90-9)*

i.e. "God has created the Rig, Yajur, Sama and Atharva Vedas".

ब्रह्म पदवाचं ब्राह्मणोधिपतिः।

Brahma Padavaayam BraahmanemaAdheepatihi *(Atharvaveda 12-5-4)*

which mean, "God is knower and revealer of the Vedas".

The Yajurveda (31.7) says: "The Rigveda, the Yajurveda, the Samaveda and the Atharvaveda were produced by the Supreme and perfect Being, Parabrahman, who possesses the attributes of self-existence, consciousness and bliss, who is Omnipotent and universally adored. The meaning is that the four Vedas were revealed by God alone."

The Atharvaveda (10.23.4.10) says: "Who is that Great Being who revealed the Rig Veda, the Yajurveda, the Samaveda and the Atharva Veda? He is the Supreme who created the universe and sustains it."

The Yajurveda (X1.8) says: "The Great Ruler of the universe, who is self-existent, All-pervading, Holy, Eternal. and Formless, has been eternally instructing His subjects — the immortal souls—in all kinds of knowledge for their good through the Veda."

[For further information inquisitive readers should refer and study—Atharvaveda 12th Khanda, 5th. Sukta and mantra # 1 to 73] (Atharvaveda 19.5.13, 12.5.4, 10.7.14); Yajurveda 2/21, 23/61, 23/62, 31/7), the all-sustaining God is the author of the four Vedas.

Subjects of the Vedas

The subjects of the Vedas put forth in three different

styles—Viz. Knowledge, action and devotion offered respectively in poetry, prose and song. There are four Vedas that contain knowledge (theories and experiments), action (Vedic expression of Yajna in experimentation), Devotion and science of medicine. In short they can be called the Para and the Apara Vidya. The Para Vidya contains the complete knowledge of the two conscious entities i.e. God and the Soul, whereas the Apara Vidya deals with the knowledge and science of materialistic insensate things—from atom to the Prakriti (i.e. the material cause of the Universe).

The books called the Rigveda, the Yajurveda, the Samaveda and the Atharvaveda contain only the Mantras, Samhitas and nothing else. Those who believe that there are only three Vedas are completely wrong and should rectify their erroreous notion. The Vedas are four in number.

God has given us a beautiful body so it is our duty to protect it. What is the use of this precious body if there is no knowledge. The "Vedic Dharma" and all other so-called religious literatures believe that "Human specie is the best because only in human specie one can acquire a proper knowledge of God, Soul and Prakriti and only from the Vedas.

Knowledge, Actions, Communion and Science are the subjects of the Vedas and are complete when combined, otherwise there is no use of studying only one subject or the other All these three subjects are very important for emancipation.

God has revealed His true knowledge to man only because man has the intellect to grasp proper knowledge from the Rigveda and after getting that proper knowledge he should act accordingly, which is taught in the Yajurveda. There is a possibility that man may become egoistic after getting knowledge and performing good deeds, so God has given him the Samaveda for balancing him i.e. communion

with God. When man has developed himself with knowledge, virtuous deeds and communion with the Supreme Being, he becomes happy in his life, but still wanders in search for something more. Lastly God provides the Atharvaveda in which man gets the knowledge of true science i.e. the science of the soul and the Supreme Soul (God). The bliss of God is possible through the Atharvaveda. Hence all the four Vedas are essential to acquire the correct and complete knowledge of the matter (Prakriti), the soul and God with which he is free from all sorrows and pains, when he renounces the worldly attraction and temptation, and gets the "Bliss of God".

When a man acquires the knowledge of the four Vedas (Knowledge, deeds, communion and science), he is qualified enough to proceed to his life's goal i.e. to get emancipation —the Bliss of God.

The four Vedas are the four pillars of success in a man's life, hence the four Vedas are essential. " God has revealed full and true knowledge in the Vedas according to man's capacity and capability to acquire the same for his upliftment and emancipation. God is Omniscient. He knows man's requirement hence He has revealed accordingly. No less or more".

The mantra revelated by knowledge are mainly stored in the Rigveda. The Yajurveda mantras are related by actions i.e. what is right and what is wrong, what to do and what is prohibited by virtue? In the Samaveda most mantras are about communion with God. Lastly in the Atharvaveda there are root mantras of science on different subjects along with mantras related to medical science.

The Great sage Swami Dayananda Saraswati has emphasized in the 'Ten Commandments of the Arya Samaj' about the importance of the Vedas. "The Vedas are the scriptures of all true knowledge and it is the paramount duty of all Aryans to read them, to teach them to others, to listen

to them and to recite them to others".

God is Omniscient and He is the only true friend of the soul, because the soul has limited power and knowledge. God is the greatest teacher and guide who revealed His knowledge in the beginning of the world after human life had been created, for the betterment of mankind.

"As parents are kind to their children and wish for their welfare, so does the Supreme Benig, out of kindness to all mankind revealed the Vedas by whose study men are freed from ignorance and error, and may attain the light of true knowledge and thereby enjoy extreme happiness as well as advance knowledge and promote their welfare"

[*Light of Truth:* VII]

The Vedas : Word of God

The Vedas are the true knowledge of God. In the beginning after human beings had been created, the Supreme Benig made the Vedas known to Brahma through Agni, etc., i.e., Brahma learnt the four Vedas from Agni, Vayu, Aaditya and Angira (Manusmriti 1-23). God revealed his true knowledge to them because among all men those four were purest at heart. God revealed the same knowledge in the beginning of the Universe as He did it in the previous creations, because the Vedas are the eternal word of God. The Vedas contain complete knowledge required by man for attaining emancipation.

The four Vedas are—The Rigveda, Yajurveda, Samveda and Atharvaveda. They contain subjects like Knowledge, Action, Communion and Science, respectively. Agni, Vayu, Aaditya and Angira were sages who had attained the eternal knowledge from Almighty God and passed on the same to mankind. All the followers of the Vedic Dharma, whatever their sect or differences in view may be, do have faith that the Vedas are knowledge of God.

In support of this the Veda itself says to prove this:

"God is Beginningless and Infinite. He is Omnipresent and He bestows on His people, the human beings, correct knowledge through the four Vedas".

(Yajurveda: 40.8)

"The supreme God is whole, most worthy of worship, to whom all sacrifices are done, He revealed the Rigveda, the Yajurveda, the Samaveda and from Him the Atharvaveda has also emerged".

(Yajurveda: 31.7)

"God created man in the beginning of the universe, thereafter enlightened the knowledge of the four Vedas to four Rishis namely Agni, Vaayu, Aaditya and Angira who passed the knowledge on to Brahama".

(Manusmriti: 1.13)

"In the beginning of the universe, God has enlightened the hearts of the Rishis Agni, Vaayu, Aaditya and Angira with the knowledge of one Veda each. (*Shatpath Brahman:* 11.4.2.3)

God is "Sarvajya" or "Sarvagya" (Omniscient) i.e. all knowledgeable, the relation between the Vedic words and their meanings also were established by Him.

God's knowledge is eternal and infallible therefore, the relation between the letters, words and meaning in the Vedas subsist for all times. They are the same in the present Kalpa (the time of the Universe) as they were in the past and shall remain the same in future also. Hence it is said in the Rigveda 8.4.48 that the Great Creator God has made the sun and the moon just as He had made them before! "The plan of the creation of the sun and the moon in the present Kalpa is the same as that which existed in God's knowledge in the previous Kalpa, because His knowledge is not liable to increase or decrease or vary."

यथा पूर्वमकल्पयत्
Yathaa Purvamakalpayat

(Rigveda 8.4.48)

There are 20,416 mantras in all the four Vedas. All these mantras are eternal because they are a part of God's knowledge. Hence there cannot be increment or decrement in the number of mantras. There cannot be any change, alteration or addition because the Vedas are called *"Shruti"* i.e. by listening from the beginning of the creation, by student-master relation, it has come in the shape of book in the present. Even today there are many pundits (spiritual teachers) in south India who remember by heart and recite all mantras from the Vedas.

The great sage Patanjali, author of the Mahabhashya, says," the words are eternal, whether they are Vedic or Loukik, because they are composed of letters which are imperishable and immovable and are not subject to elision, augmentation and substitution. Words are eternal because in them there is no elision (Apaya), disappearance, nor augmentation (Upajna), nor substitution (Vikara).

Today the whole world agrees and all well-known learned philosophers believe that "the Vedas are the oldest books on earth". The Vedas contain in them all the true sciences, as they are not the scripture of mere rituals and sacraments. They are the repositories of all true knowledge including science and procedure of rituals and ceremonies. It is only he who can search the treasure of knowledge lying concealed in the Vedas.

Religious Books : The Vedas are God's word, which are believed by all ancient Rishis, Saints, Fakirs, Sufis and Super souls like Bhagwan Rama Chandra and Yogeshwar Shri Krishna Bhagwan and other religious personalities all over the globe, to be authoritative and adorable. The books

that contain truth according to the teachings of the Vedas must be accepted as authoritative but the Vedas are said to be "Ultimate Authoritative Scriptures" because they contain an exposition of "Dharma" or righteousness.

The meaning of the aphorism is that all men should acknowledge the eternal authority of the four Vedas, because they enjoy the performance of Dharma as a duty and are the word of God. (Vaisheshika Darshan: 1.1.3)

Books like Ramayana, Geeta, Mahabharata, are written by our sages like Valmiki and Vyasa respectively. It is possible that there may be mistakes and errors in these so-called holy books because they are written by human beings. Learned readers of these books can come across and find many names of people, places of Indian origin and incidents like wars registered which show that these books are not revealed by the Supreme Being. They are written by men and are the history of our great nation Bharata (now India). Sage Valmiki wrote the great historical book "Ramayana", in the same way Great sage Vyasa wrote Mahabharata, and Geeta is a small portion of Mahabharata. The Geeta is said to be the voice of Yogeshwara Shri Krishna.

Maryada Purushottam Shri Ramachandra and Yogeshwar Shri Krishna Maharaj both were great kings and their lifestyle and details of their kingdom were written in these books. How can one believe these books as holy and books of eternal truth revealed by God and are true? The Vedas are for mankind and for their upliftment and betterment.

The Rigveda, the Yajurveda, the Samaveda and the Atharvaveda are the subjects of knowledge, action, communion and science respectively and all the true knowledge is distributed in these, according to the capability and capacity of the soul to acquire the knowledge. The Vedas do contain the root principles of all the sciences. Of

these, the first in importance is Theosophy i.e. the knowledge of God. The Vedas also contain the root principles of Science, Mathematics, Astronomy, Gandharva Veda (music), Ayurveda (medicine), astrology etc. hence only the Veda is God's word.

God's knowledge is always revealed in the beginning of the creation and not millions of years later. Suppose for the time being, if we believe that all books of different religions to be true and God's word, then God is proved to be unjust and unlawful. Because many centuries after the creation of men, who had committed sinful actions unto now are not guilty of their sins as they were not given His true knowledge in time, and it is too late for them to receive the fruits of their sins. This shows that God had not given His knowledge to those men who were born and died before these so called holy books emerged. But we believe God to be Just and Omniscient. Hence God flows His eternal knowledge with the creation for the betterment of all men. So the Vedas are the only theosophy to be believed and known.

"It is a clearly established fact that the Ramayana came into existence about 9,00,000 years ago in Treta Yuga, the Mahabharata just about 5,000 years ago. In the same way the Bible came into existence about 2000 years ago and the Quran about 1500 years ago. It means that all the thousands of human generations who were born and died before these two scriptures since the origin of man on this earth, all of them were denied the knowledge of God, without there being any fault of those people. Thus God loses His being Administrator of justice. God's knowledge should be bestowed at the time of emergence of man on earth, so that no child of God is denied to take advantage of His knowledge." (Commentary on the ten principles of the Arya Samaj by Shri Vijay Behari Lal Mathur)

To believe on the words of an Aapta i.e. spiritual teacher is justified if they are in accordance to the Vedic teachings and if they (teachings) are against the teachings of the Vedas it is certainly not to be believed. Indeed! **Geeta, Ramayana, Mahabharata, Quran, Bible** etc., whatever true teachings or incidents are written in these so called holy books should be accepted, there is no harm in accepting them and treating them as history and not as God's words.

"The collection of the four books, viz., Rig, Yajur, Sama and Atharva, which have been uttered by God contain all true knowledge are the Vedas. People learn what is pure and what is not true from these Vedas."

Attainment of supreme knowledge i.e. Vedic knowledge is the right of every human being, whosoever he/she may be. True knowledge is the key to heaven that can be acquired through the Vedas only. It is only after one sees divine light within him/her inner self that self-transformation and holistic well being shall become a reality.

The Vedas : The Divine Knowledge

There are many books that claim to be holy, authoritative and of divine origin. One question that arises here is 'How to know which of them is really divinely revealed? Why to believe only the Vedas as Holy Scriptures and authoritative books? True! It's natural. Many questions arise in mind, but it is not difficult to examine and determine it, after we apply the following requisite tests:

1. The supreme knowledge emanates from the same Lord who is the creator of the universe and to whom we give our corporeal existence in this life and the lives to come. Therefore, there should be no contradiction between what we read in the texts and what we observe in the universe. Of the 'Padartha', the 'Padas' are in the Veda and the 'Artha'

(meaning) is in the universe. For example—the word "cow" is in the Veda and its 'Artha' i.e. the particular animal known by that name is in the world.

2. God is Holy, Formless, All-pervading, All-knowing, All-powerful, Just, Benevolent and never subject to birth and death. The book that describes its author exactly as He shall be accepted as Divine Revealed.
3. The book, inspired by God, should not be found to contain against the law of nature, the evidence of the senses and other logical concerns.
4. God is infallible, while to err is human. Therefore the teaching in God's book should be equally infallible and never subject to amendment.
5. To err is human, The question of any error in the case of the Supreme Lord does not arise. Hence, the Divine Revelation must be without any error.
6. If there is God who has created heaven and earth and endowed man with all the knowledge he needs, it will be unjust on His part to deprive millions of His sons (born before Divine Revelation) of His knowledge. Reason and comparative study of religion requires God to reveal His knowledge from the first appearance of man on earth.
7. All knowledge should be delivered once and for all, and not in instalments, spreading over millions of years. Since God cannot err, the question of amendments, addition and subtractions in His knowledge does not arise.
8. There should be no historical or geographical references in a book claiming to have been composed or delivered in the beginning of creation—no mention of territorial divisions or proper names of rivers, mountains, things or persons

or specific events.

Names of certain historical persons and geographical places found here and there in the Vedas may create a false impression about the existence of the elements of historicity in the Vedas. But when they are dig deeper and examined in the context in which they occur and the text which precedes or follows them the so-called element of historicity vanishes.

Some Opinions about the Vedas:

- The Veda is the source of all knowledge. *(Manusmriti: 2.6)*
- The Veda being the work of Brahma (God) , its authority is established. *(Vaisheshika Darshana : Rishi Kanaad)*
- The Veda having been produced by His (Brahma) own power, carry their authority within themselves. *(Sankhya Darshan: Rishi Kapila)*
- The Veda is surely eternal because it is manifested for the sake of others. It exists for ever in its own right. *(Purva Meemansa: 1.1.8—Rishi Jaimini)*
- In the beginning of the universe Self-existent Brahm (God) revealed the Vedas. *(Mahabharat —Vedvyas)*
- The Vedas are the scriptures of all true knowledge. It is the first duty of all Aryans to read them, teach them and hear them being read. *(Maharshi Dayanandaa Saraswati)*
- The Vedas are eternal and consequently perfect and infallible. *(Maxmuller in "Introduction of science and religion")*
- The Vedas are revealed by Omkar. How can one praise the holy Vedas! They are endless. How can their end be found. *(Guru Granth Sahab: 1:1 and 10:3)*
- After gradual research, I have come to the conclusion that long before all heavenly books like the Quran, the Old Testament and the New Testament etc. emerged. God had revealed to the Hindus through the Rishis of Yore, of

whom Brahma was the chief, His four books of knowledge, the Rigveda, the Yajurveda, the Samaveda, and the Atharva Veda. *(Dara Shikoh, son of Shahjahan and elder brother of Aurangzeb; from his Persian qutations.)*

- The Vedas stand alone in their splendour, standing as beacon of 'Divine Light' for the onward march of humanity.
(Professor Heeren in 'Historical Researches, Vol. II)
- It cannot be denied that the early Indians possessed a knowledge of the true God. All their writings are replete with sentiments and expressions—noble, clear, lovely, grand, as deeply conceived as in any human language in which men have spoken of their God.
(Schlegel, German Philosopher)
- Do not say that the Vedas are false. Liars are those who do not try to understand the Vedas." *(Saint Kabir)*
- He who attains true knowledge from or righteousness from the Vedas, attains a steady position.
(Mahatma Buddha)
- James Hastings in his Encyclopaedia on Religion and Ethics says—"Dayanandaa tried to make the book of God resemble the book of nature."
- A great philosopher of England, W. D. Brown, writes on the 'Superiority of the Vedic Religion'—"The Vedic Religion is thoroughly scientific where science and religions meet hand in hand. Here theology is based on science and philosophy."
- Louis Jacolliot has observed: "Astonishing fact! The Hindu Revelation, Veda, is of all revelations, the only one whose ideas are in perfect harmony with modern science."
(*The Bible in India*, Vol. II, Chap. 1)
- The great scholiast of Maharashtra (India) Shri B.B. Panagi, writing about the Vedas in his 'Vedic India-

Mother of Parliaments' says—"The Vedas are the fountainhead of knowledge, the prime source of inspiration, nay, the ground depository of Divine wisdom and external truth."

The author again writes in his important books. *'The Vedic fathers of Geology'*—I take this opportunity to remind the reader without any fear of contradiction, that the Vedas contain many things not yet known to anybody, as they form a mine of inexhaustible literary wealth that has still remained unexposed."

- Sir Maxmuller believed that "the Rig-Veda is the most ancient book of the world. The sacred hymns of the Brahmans stand unparalleled in the literature of the whole world and their presentation might well be called miraculous."

  "The Rigveda reflected India's nature at all times—a spiritual India, devoting all her energy to religious and philosophical problems."

  "In the whole world there is no study so beneficial and so elevating as that of the Upanishads. It has been the solace of my life, it will be the solace of my death". [To confirm his stand, he quoted the German philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer.]
- All ancient sages as well as modern sages agree that the Vedas are God's Revelation since man came into existence.
- This goes to confirm the popular belief that the Vedas are eternal and not ascribable to any human agency (Apurusheya/अपुरुषेय) and that they emanated from Brahma, the creator himself. [*Ibid* : page. 558 (Bal Gangadhar Tilak)]
- The Vedas are valid in themselves. *(Dr. S. Radhakrishnan)*
- This goes to confirm the popular belief that the Vedas are eternal and not answerable to any human agency and that they emanated from Brahm, the creator Himself.

(Arthur Schopenhauer—German Philosopher)

- The Almighty, Infinite, Eternal, Incomprehensible, Self-existent Being, He who sees everything though never seen is Brahm, the one unknown, true being, Creator, the Preserver, and Destroyer of the universe. Under such and innumerable other definitions is the Deity acknowledged in the Vedas.

(Charles Coleman in 'Theophany of the Hindus')

Trinity

GOD, SOUL AND THE MATTER

There exists three categories of eternal self-caused entities: (1) God, (2) the Soul, and (3) the Prakriti i.e. the material cause of the universe. This eternal trinity is the basis of the creation "Tritiyo Bhrata" (Rigveda 1-164-1). The trinity consists of two things.—Conscious and unconscious. God and souls both are conscious and Prakriti i.e. the material cause of the universe is unconscious or dead inert matter. God is One and supporter of all and souls are innumerous in number. Being a dead inert matter, the Prakriti cannot do anything that means it cannot move by itself or work by itself.

God

God is an Eternal, Conscious, Formless and All-pervading entity who is the efficient cause of the Universe and the support of all. The Benevolent Supreme is Sacchidanand-Swaroop i.e. Plenary-Existence (Sat) + Plenary-Intelligence (Chit) + Plenary-Blissful (Ananda) personified. He is Shuddh (Holy), Apprehend, Self-caused and Independent by nature. He is Sarva-Shaktimaan (Omnipotent), Nirakara (Formless), Ṣarvajya i.e. All knowledgeable (Omniscient) and Sarva-Vyapaka (Omnipresent). He is Infinite, homogenous, non-composite Spirit, which is incomparable to anything. Countless creations and innumerable souls reside in God and God

Himself resides in all these things. There is no place left vacant in this universe where there is non-existence of the Supreme Soul.

ईशा वास्यामिदंध्सर्वम्

"Ishaa Vaasyamidam Sarvam"

(Yajurveda 40/1)

It means God is Omnipresent and resides everywhere in this universe. God is the absolute Brahman (above all). Being Omnipresent, He is not an object of sense perception and can never be perceived through sense organs hence He is "Atindriya " or Trans-sensuous.

Whose attributes, actions, nature and oritological essences are nothing but truth is called "God". He is one, without a second. God is Nitya i.e. causeless (Eternal). He is without a beginning. By His nature He is Imperishable, Gynostic, Blissful, Pure, Just, Merciful, Unborn, Unchangeable and Incomparable etc.

Another aspect of God (Supreme Spirit) or the Ultimate Reality is that He is free from differences. The three kinds of differences of objects of the phenomenal world do not apply to Him. As there is no other God from which He is to be distinguished, He has no Sajatiya Bheda i.e. difference of an object of the same class. There is nothing else other than Him or outside Him, which should make for Vijatiya Bheda i.e. differences from an object of another class. Likewise, God has no parts necessitating Svagata Bheda i.e. difference amongst various parts of the same object.

God is Omnipresent being the all. He can thus be infinitesimally minute and infinitely mighty also. Being all-powerful, He is capable of carrying out the minutest and the mightiest of jobs.

God is Nirakara or Formless. It is so because He is all and everywhere. Possessing a specific form would mean

limiting Him within physical contours. So, He is Omnipresent.

It is said in the Mandookyopanishad (Kandika 3) that God and the soul both are in the awakening stage and they are called "Saptanga" i.e. they have seven things because of their Nature, Characteristics and Attributes. These seven things are 'Drishti', 'Shruti', "Vak", 'Eakshana', 'Sankalpa', 'Vikalpa' and 'Kriya'. God is infinite i.e. omnipresent whilst the soul being finite resides in one place, so their above-stated meaning varies from one another.

Vedic evidences :

Formless—Nirakara निराकार (Yajurveda: 40/4)
Omnipotent—Sarva Shaktimaan सर्व शक्तिमान्
Omniscient—Sarvajya सर्वज्ञ (Yajurveda: 32/10)
Undecaying and Everlasting—Ajar अजर
(Atharvaveda 10/8/44)
Fearless—Abhaya अभय (Atharvaveda: 10/21/1)
Eternal—Nitya नित्य (Yajurveda: 34/53)
Pure—Pavitra पवित्र (Atharvaveda: 10/8/40)
Creator of the universe—Srishti-Karta सृष्टिकर्त्ता
(Atharvaveda: 13/3/15)
One, Adorable, Blissful—Anand Swaroop आनन्दस्वरूप
(Atharvaveda: 2/2/1)
All blissful—Anand Swaroop स्वर्यस्य च केवलं
(Atharvaveda: 10/164/20, Atharvaveda 10-8-2)
Witness—Abhokta and Sakshi अभोक्त व साक्षी
(Rigveda: 1/164/20)
Yogi visualizes Him in Hridaya or Inner faculty:
(Rigveda: 8/72/3)
Truth is Dharma: Savita Satyadharmaa:
(Atharvaveda: 10/8/42)

God as original source of all phenomena:

The first principle of the Arya Samaj: "God is the

original source of all that is true knowledge and all that is known by physical sciences". In this first principle God has been pronounced as the Original source of Soul and nature. The original source does not mean creator. The Trinity i.e. God, Soul and Nature are Beginningless and infinite by alteration, So the Trinity was never born. The meaning of original source is "One earlier to whom and beyond whom nothing exists". God existed at all times and thus is the original source of everything including nature and soul.

During the visible existence of the universe, nature exists in its covertly visible form, but during the period of deluge (Pralaya) nature exists in its Un-describable primary element form. At the termination of the period of deluge, by the Supreme Will of God (Eshnaa) motion starts in the elements of nature, and the invisible nature takes the shape of creation of the Universe. The laws of creation are enforced by God, who is all-knowledgeable as well as Omnipresent and Omnipotent. Therefore, God has been described as the original source of nature.

Soul does not die, it is only the body which perishes by death and the soul takes re-birth in another body, in the same way, as Lord Krishna says in the Geeta, in which we adorn a new dress when we discard the old one. The law of justice of the God decides the transmigration of soul from one body to the other. Hence God has been pronounced as the original source of soul also. As stated above it should be quite clear that by being original source, God has not been pronounced as the creator of soul and nature, as these two are themselves beginning-less and infinite.

He is called God whose attributes, actions, nature and oritological essences are nothing but truth. He is one, without a second. God is Omniscient (All knowledgeable), Omnipresent and Eternal means He is without a beginning or end. By His nature He is Imperishable, Gynostic, Blissful,

Pure, Just, Merciful, Unborn, Unchangeable, Incomparable etc.

जन्मद्यस्ययात्

"Janmadyasyayatah"

(Vedanta 1-1-2)

means He who is Generator, Organizer and Destroyer of the Universe is called GOD.

क्लेषकर्मविपाकाशयैरपरामृष्टः

"KleshKarma Vipakashayairaparamrishtah"

(Yoga Darshana)

It means He who is away from Ignorance, Happiness, Unhappiness, Desires, Undesired and mixed actions which bear the fruits, special from all souls, is called God.

God is Benevolent and Fearless. His activities include the creation, preservation, and destruction of the marvellous structure of the Universe and the dispensation of reward or punishment commensurate with the virtuous or vicious deeds of all living beings.

Most of the great philosophers have maintained that there exists some sort of absolute, whether it is called God, the Good, the Giest or any other name.

God is one without a second. In this vast creation, there are an infinite number of souls all of infinitesimal dimensions. God and Souls being conscious entities do not occupy any space.

The Veda, clarifies this in the Rigveda mantra:

द्वा सुपर्णा सयुजा सखाया समानं वृक्षं परि षस्वजाते।
तयोरन्यः पिप्पलं स्वाद्वत्त्यनश्नन्नन्यो अभि चाकशीति।।

"Dwa Suparna Sayuja Sakhaya Samanam Vriksham Pari Shasvajate,
Tayoranyah Pippalam Swadwattyanashnannynyo Abhi Chakshiti." *(Rigveda 1-164-20)*

Which means: God, souls and Prakriti i.e. the material cause of the Universe are eternal.

[(Rigveda (1-164-44), (Rigveda 1-164-1), (Rigveda 1-50-10), (Rigveda 10-5-7), (Rigveda 6-66-3), (Atharvaveda 5-35)]

—Like these there are many mantras in the Vedas that prove that God, Souls and the matter i.e. Prakriti are eternal.

God is Omnipotent, Omniscient and Omnipresent where as the souls have limited knowledge hence to know Him fully is out of our capability.

God is Self-existence, Intelligence and Bliss personified. He is Devoid of any form[1], Omnipotent, Just, Merciful, Benevolent, Eternal, Infinite, Unchangeable, Beginning less, Incomparable, Support of all, Lord of all, Omnipresent, Omniscient i.e. Controller of all from within, Undecaying, Imperishable, Fearless, Eternal, Holy and Creator, Sustainer and Destructor of the Universe. He is one without a second. To Him alone worship that is always due.

There are many mantras in The Vedas, which say that there is only One God without a second God is Omniscient, Omnipotent, Omnipresent, worship is due to Him alone.

Here are some mantras as a proof to show that God is one:

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1. God is formless. He cannot be limited in any shape, size or body. Only if one attribute of God is accepted that He is having form, His other several important attributes are contradicted automatically. God with a form cannot be Omnipresent, Omnipotent, Omniscient, Unbegotten, Infinite, Unchangeable, Beginningless, All-pervading, Creator of the universe, Imperishable, Eternal etc. A power with a form may possess all these attributes is not possible; cannot logically be proved and cannot be supported by any evidence from the Vedas. God is formless and that formless God alone is adorable.

एको अन्यच्यकृपे विश्वमानुशक
"Eko Anyachyakripe Vishwamaanushaka."
(Rigveda 1-4-4-14)

इन्द्र चोश्कूयसे वासु
"Indra Choshkooyase Vaasu."
(Rigveda 5-8-17-41)

स विश्वस्य करुणास्पेशा एको
"Sa Vishwasya Karunaspesha Eko."
(Rigveda1-7-9-7)

हिरण्यगर्भ समवर्तताग्रे भूतस्य जातः पतिरेक आसीत्।
सदाधार पृथिवीं द्यामुतेमां कस्मै देवाय हविषा विधेम॥
"Hiranyagarbhah Samavartataagre Bhutasya Jaatah Patireka Aaseet, Sadaadhaara Prithivim Dyaamutemaam Kasmai Devaya Havishaa Vidhem."
(Rigveda 10-21-1)

विश्वतश्चक्षुरुता.....जनया देव एकः
"Vishvatashchakshuruta—Janaya Deva Ekah"
(Yajurveda 17-9)

The Rigveda: [(8-58-2), (1-164-46), (10-14-5), (10-114-4), (10-121-3), (8-58-2), (6-15-11), (8-13-9)]

The Yajurveda: [(17-26), (13-4), (17-9), (17-21), (13-4)]

The Atharvaveda: [(8-5-26), (2-2-1), (8-5-20), (13-4, mantras from 1 to 56)]

In Rigveda— volume 3, chapter 55 and mantra No. 1 to 22, and in the same volume, in chapter # 56, 57, 58, 59, by referring all these mantras, it is authentically proved that God is One without a second.

All mantras (20,416 — Twenty thousand four hundred and sixteen) in the four Vedas glorify that God has many names according to His nature, characteristics and attributes but He is One without a second.

God is blissful

सर्वस्य च केवलम्

"Swaryasya Cha Kevalam" *(Atharvaveda 10-8-2)*

so he who is very near to Him feels / experiences His bliss which is called "Ananda". For example—one feels hot when he is near fire, because he gets the attributes of fire and in the same way when some one is near ice, he feels cold. By communion with God the soul experiences the bliss i.e. "Ananda" because God is full of Ananda.

It is natural that by communion with the dead inert matter i.e. Prakriti, one gets the attributes of Prakriti, and in the same way, by communion with the Super Being, one acquires the attributes, actions and nature of God. God and the soul i.e. Jiva are both conscious entities. The soul is without bliss and God is full of bliss "Swaryasya Cha Kevalam" this eloquent is from The Vedas that God is blissful. The soul who is near to God enjoys His bliss. Also it is authoritative that in the state of final realization (i.e. in the state of 'Samaadhi') in Yoga, one can experience the bliss of the Supreme Being. What sages and knowledgeable people have said can also be taken as proof that bliss is in God alone. "Mandra" Means God is bliss personified.

THE SOUL

The soul is an infinitesimal entity and said to be ten thousand times subtler than the tip of hair.

(*Shwetashwataropanishad:* 5.9)

The soul is so subtle that it is not to be seen with any apparatus or instrument. (*Atharvaveda:* 10.8.85)

The innumerous numbers of souls that exist in Universe are one of the three eternal entities. The soul is a different entity from Omnipresent God and the Prakriti (Rigveda 1-164-20). This is an important point to be borne in mind that the souls are not the parts/portions/divisions/parcels/pieces

of God. God is an Omnipresent, Omniscient, Omnipotent, All-pervading entity (*Yajurveda* 40/1) hence He cannot be divided into two or infinite pieces. He is Nirvikaar, means without any defects. (Yajurveda: 34/53). He is one and absolute.

Besides the inanimate nature, and the Omnipotent Conscious God, we also observe animate beings, beginning from the microscopic single cell creation to huge animals, birds, fishes and the superior-most of all animate beings—the man. All these animate being possess the power of desire, of feeling of pleasure and pain and capacity, more or less, of thinking and making efforts instinctively as well as thought-out. This power which makes animate being to function is called soul or Atma. The relationship between God and Soul is that God is the pervading force in Soul. God is worshipped, the Soul is the worshipper; God is the father, Soul is like His son; God awards judicious fruit to Soul for his right or wrong doings. God, Nature and Soul are infinite and Beginning-less or eternal by alteration of universe and deluge, and of creation or decay in universe in case of Nature; and by death of body and re-birth in case of Soul.

Soul is an Existence and conscious entity. They are innumerous in numbers. Human beings cannot count the exact number because of limited knowledge. Of course, in God's Omniscient knowledge, souls are limited. There cannot be increment or decrement in the number of souls, as the souls are beginning less and endless, hence they are eternal. Even in the state of salvation, a soul cannot count the number of existing souls.

In emancipation the Soul lives in its own personified State and experiences the bliss of salvation by its own qualities and attributes. Hence in the state of emancipation it is called "the Soul" or "the Spirit" and when the soul lives in

functional body it is called "the Living Being", "Jiva", "Jivatma" or "the Self". All these names are of the same thing but with different names in different states.

The body does not have the quality of consciousness though it appears to have this quality under the influence of the soul.

In other words when the soul is in its personified state, It is called the Soul or the spirit. And when it occupies the body, it is called the self, the living being, Jiva or Jivatma till it is liberated from the bondage of birth and death and attains emancipation and experiences the bliss of Ultimate Being.

The Soul is eternal because it has no beginning hence it is infinite and unchangeable. When compared to God, who is omniscient, omnipresent and omnipotent, the Soul has limitation of knowledge. The soul being an infinitesimal entity resides in one place (Atharvaveda 19-68), whereas God is all pervading, hence there is no place in the Universe where He does not exist.

ईशा वास्यमिदं सर्वम्

"Ishaa Vaasyamidam Sarvam" (Yajurveda 40/1)
means God resides in this whole Universe.

A Jiva is a conscious being with limited learning. It is endowed with the attributes like longing, aversion, striving, happiness, grief and knowledge.

The Soul is recognised by the attributes (लिङ्ग Lingas) given below: They are:—Pleasure, Sorrow, Desire, Envy, Activity and Consciousness (*Nyaaya Darshana* 1-1-10). Besides these there are more attributes like Inspiration and expiration, nictitation (closing and opening of the eyes), organic growth, discernment, memory, individuality, movement, regulation of the senses, internal changes and disorder such as hunger and thirst, joy and sorrow, etc. (Vaisheshika Darshana 3-2-4) which distinguish the soul from God.

The existence of the soul is known only by these attributes as it is neither nor perceptible by the senses. These attributes manifest themselves only so long as the soul is present in the body, but cease to do so as soon as the soul leaves it. Here we present some of the proofs about soul's attributes:

It is told in the Vedas that the soul is अश्नः *"Ashnah" (Rigveda* 1-164-1) i.e. pleasure and sorrow are experienced by the soul.

अपङ्ग प्रोरेति *"Aapaang Proreti"* (Rigveda 1-64-38) means that the soul acquires the desire for the acquisition of things and envy.

सन्नधो मनसा चरामि *"Sannadho Manasaa Charami"* (Rigveda 1-64-27) i.e. it moves with consciousness and it closes and open eyes and breathes.

प्रच्छामि *"Prachchhaami"* (Rigveda 1-164-6) i.e. I am asking that mean the soul has limited knowledge.

As long as the soul remains in the body, these attributes are discernible in the body but when the soul leaves it, they are not found there. This is the way in which we have the knowledge of existence of the soul. The physical body is a useful medium for manifestation of the soul. The soul is a conscious entity which experiences pleasure and pain through the medium of the body which being physical (materialistic) decay and perishes, but the soul being non-physical does not decay or die. The soul is eternal, ever lasting, endless because it is an unborn entity.

Innate powers of the soul:

"Really it is of one kind, but it may be said to consist of the following 24 varieties:

1. Strength; 2. Energy; 3. Attraction; 4. Suggestion; 5. Motion; 6. Intimidation; 7. Analytic Power; 8. Skill;

9. Courage; 10. Memory; 11. Discernment; 12. Desire; 13. Love; 14. Hatred; 15. Association; 16. Dissociation; 17. Dividing power; 18. Combining power; 19. Power of sight; 20. Hearing; 21. Touch; 22. Taste; 23. Smell; and 24. Knowledge. (*Satyarth Prakash:* Chapter 9)

By the help of these very powers the soul attains and enjoys happiness even in Emancipation. If the soul, when emancipated, were to be absorbed into Brahma, who would then enjoy the bliss of emancipation. Those who regard the dissolution of soul as emancipation are no Quest immersed in ignorance, because the emancipation of the soul consists in its exemption from all sin and suffering and in the enjoyment of perfect bliss in the All-pervading, All-blissful, Infinite, Omnipotent God." [Brahma means who is great, i.e. God]

There are many proofs in the Vedas that that show that the soul is everlasting, imperishable, immortal and eternal entity:

Now refer these Vedic mantras:

अमृत्यो मृत्येना सयोनीः *"Amartyo Mrityenaa Sayaoneehi"* (Rigveda 1-164-30) means that the immortal soul exists in the mortal body.

मर्तेश्वग्निमृत्यो नि धायिः *"Marteshvagniramrito Ni Dhaayeehi"* (Rigveda 10-45-7) means that the soul lives in man.

सश्चद् देवो देवं सत्यामिन्द्रं सत्य इन्दुः *"Sashchad Devo Devam, Satyamindram Satya Induhu"* (Rigveda 2-22-1). means: God stays with immortal soul in this body.

न यं रिपवो न...प्रेतरि अराक्षरन्॥

"Na Yam Ripavo Na Ripanyavo Garbhe Santam Reshana Reshayanti, Andhah Apashyaa Na Dabhanbhiravya Nityaasa ii Pretari Arakhsharan" (Rigveda 1-149-5)

The meaning of this mantra: No enemy can harm the soul because it is imperishable, immortal, everlasting and eternal, hence it can never be killed by anyone. A thing that is created must perish, but the soul is uncreated so it is imperishable.

There is a popular Shloka in Shrimad Bhagwat Geeta, in which Yogeshwar (the Lord of Yoga) Shri Krishna explains to Arjuna that—

नैनं छिन्दन्ति शस्त्राणि, नैनं दहति पावकः।
न चैनं क्लेदयन्त्यापो, न शोषयन्ति मारुतः॥

"Nainam Chhindanti Shastraani, Nainam Dahati Pavakah, Na Chainam Kledayantyaapo, Na Shoshayati Maarutah" (Geeta 2-23)

This means that "The soul is eternal, hence any weapon cannot cut it, fire cannot burn it, water cannot dissolve it and air cannot dry or evaporate it".

Residence of Soul in the body:

The soul resides in Hridaya (हृदय) our hearts. It is said that the brain and the heart, both have the same meaning as 'Hridaya'. Hridaya has three letters. Hri+Da+Ya. 'Hri' meaning, to bring, 'Da' means to give and 'Ya' means to move. The thing that does all three works in the body is called 'Hridaya' which is nothing but the brain. Brain receives knowledge through the sensory nerves, supplies it to the soul, and inspires the Karmendriyas (action organs) to act through the Motor nerves i.e. Sense organs. For this reason the brain always moves on.

Scientific law of motion explains that—"A thing does not move where it is. It cannot move where it is not. It can move where it is to where it is not." This proves that the soul is an infinitesimal entity where as God is an infinite entity.

It is described in the anatomy of *'Sushrut Samhita'* that the shape of the Hridaya is like a reversed lotus flower, which is open in state of awakening and closes in the state of sleeping. It is clear that Hridaya is not 'Heart' but it is the brain, which is always active when we are awake and rests when we rest or sleep.

Strangely enough, everywhere in Ayurveda the word "Hridaya" is used as the seat of mind, intellect, centre for sleep, consciousness and similar faculties. Charak states, "if the 'Hridaya' is injured unconsciousness occurs and if it is destroyed the limbs are paralysed and death follows. It is interesting to note that the latin word *'cordis'* (Greek-Kardia) has originated from the Sanskrit root 'Shradh', 'Shradha' or 'Shraddha'. All these words mean respect, which in a body consists of the mind and not of the heart. According to Charak the body consists of six limbs-knowledge, five senses, soul and thought (Charak-Samhita: 30/45). Therefore, it can be assumed that most of the functions attributed to the 'Hridaya' are functions of the brain. The functions of the brain stated in various texts can be summarised as: -

1. It is a place of Atma (Soul).
2. The centre of Chetana (Consciousness).
3. The seat of five senses.
4. Store house of Buddhi (Intellect).
5. Store house of Smriti (Memory)
6. The seat of Chitta
7. The centre of Jiva
8. Regulator of Nidra (Sleep)
9. Seat of 'Rajas' (Emotion and Passion)
10. Snayu Kendra (Centre of nervous system)

According to the modern medical science, there are two types of deaths -Clinical and Biological. A person is declared 'dead' by a doctor when he examines the patient

and finds that the heart has stopped working. This is called a 'Clinical death'. Biological death is an actual death. In this case doctor examines the patient's brain biologically and when he finds that the patient's brain is not working at all, then the person is declared 'Dead'. From this argument it is clear that existence of the soul is in the brain and not in the heart.

The soul at the time of death, exits either from an eye, tip of the head or from any other part of the body (Brihadaaranyakopanishad: 4.4.2). The soul leaves the body with all its Karanas i.e. instruments (Koutakeya Brahman Upanishad: 3.4).

Prakriti

Sattva-Rajas-Tamas when these three qualities (attributes) are found combined in equal proportions i.e. the equanimous condition of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas is called the Matter or Prakriti. Being a 'Jada' (Jada is pronounced as जड़ jarra) i.e. dead inert matter, there is no consciousness in Prakriti. It remains in this condition at all times of absolute dissolution (Pralaya). To make it in a workable condition, the influence of conscious entity is essential. When activated by the observational power of God, the gross creation takes place.

मर्तेष्वग्निरमृतो नि धयि

"Marteshvagniramrito Ni Dyayi" (Rigveda 10-45-7)

Which means:—There are two conscious (Intellect) entities and they are God (Super conscious and all intellect) and an innumerous finite number of souls (conscious with limited knowledge). Having limited knowledge, the soul is unable to create the Universe, hence the only remaining entity is God. With God's influence, changes take place in motionless Prakriti. With "Kshobh" i.e. Big Bang, movement

takes place in the Prakriti and creation of the Universe starts from here.

The great Sage Kapil explains in the Sankhya Darshan—

सत्त्वरजस्तमं समयावस्था प्रकृतिः प्रकृतिर्महान महतोहङ्कारो-हङ्कारात्। पञ्चतन्मात्राऽन्युभयमिंऽइन्द्रियं तन्मात्रेभ्यः स्थूलभूतानि पुरुष इति पञ्चविंशतिर्गणाः ॥

"Sattvarajastamam Samyavastha Prakritih Prakritermahan Mahatohankarohankarat Panch Tanmatra-nyubhaymin-Indriyam Tanmatrebhyah Sthulabhutani Purush Iti Panchavinshatirganah".

(Sankhya Darshan: 61)

Means—"there are twenty-four divisions of dead inert matter or जड़ पदार्थ 'Jada Padaarth'" which are as follows: —

Prakriti means the material cause of the universe. *Mahatattva* means the principle of wisdom or the intellect. *Ahankara* means the principle of individuality or ego elements. There are eleven Indriyas i.e. eleven principle of senses which consists of the mind, five Gyanendriyas or five sense organs (ear, skin, eyes, tongue and nose) and five Karmendriyas or five action organs (hands, feet, tongue, genital organs). The Panch-Tanmatras i.e. five principle of subtle entities are speech, touch, vision, taste and smell. And lastly Panch-Mahabhoota i.e. five gross entities or five great elements are ether, air, fire, water and earth.

Twenty-three substances made from the Prakriti are called "Vikaras of the Prakriti " or "Srishti".

God and the soul are called "Purusha" but both are distinct from each other. God is one and infinitesimal souls are infinite in numbers.

The Universe is full of wonders and mysteries. It's because of scientific plus artistic creation of Omniscient God. Science means the laws of the nature. Science is already there only one has to discover or explore it. God is

the greatest scientist so His creation is perfect. Scientists wonder when they discover something and they agree that some super power exists behind them. The natural laws are perfect as God has created them, and no one can alter or change them.

Atom is the smallest possible materialistic thing that cannot be divided further. In each and every atom there exist three basic substances / energies named as Electron, Proton and Neutron. When more than one atoms unite, molecule or element is created and in the same way when these elements unite together great elements / gross elements are formed, such as —earth, water, fire, air, ether, space and time are the elements of the creation of the Universe *(Vaisheshika Darshana)*.

God is Immovable because He is Omnipresent hence all-pervading, and all the rest like the stars, suns, moons, planets, satellites etc. have motion and these heavenly bodies are stationed in space due to the magnetic force of Soma i.e. The Supreme Being. There are many mantras in the Vedas in which the creation of the Universe is explained and they are the subjects of science.[1]

The Nebula is the main cause of the material world. The big explosion afterwards results into many suns that spread in all directions. (This expansion is still on). The sound which is the effect of that Big Bang always vibrates in the Universe and that sound is called "Akashvani", "Shabda", "Anhad Naad", etc. in Hindi and "the Sound of Ultimate Reality", "the Word", "the Oracle" etc. in English. The pronunciation of that vibrating everlasting sounds as

1. Courtesy: "The science of Medicine and the Physiological Concept in Ancient and Medieval India" by Dr. Ashok K. Bagchi. The book is published by 'National Book Trust of India' edited by Dr. N.S. Keswani.

"OM". Scientists call it "Creative energy" or "Vibrating energy" that creates the Universe. In the Vedic philosophy this creative energy or vibrating energy is nothing but God.

त्रिस्यः भूमिः प्रतिमानम्

"Trisyah Bhumih Pratimanam" (Rigveda 1-102-8) means there are three kinds of worlds in space. *Firstly,* are those which are self-illuminated are called "Nakshatras or Stars" and the group of these Nakshatras are called "Galaxies" and group of galaxies is called "the Solar System". *Secondly* there are other Un-illuminated heavenly bodies which rotate in elliptic way on their own Nakshatras and also rotate on their own axis these are called "Grahaa" or "Planet" *e.g.* Earth, Jupiter etc. and get light from the sun. *Thirdly,* there are those which rotate on their own axis and also rotate in elliptic way on their own Graha, they are called "Upa-Grahaa", or "Satellite", *e.g.* moon. They all stay in universe in spherical form and under the Universal force of gravitation which is "Soma".

In this way everything moves in the Universe. Our planet on which we live i.e. our earth is moving at a speed of 66,000 miles per hour around the sun, completing its round in 365.25 days in a year. The laws of nature are unchangeable hence these are called ऋत "Ritta", and no one [even God] cannot change or alter these laws, because they are made by all-knowing God.

In the creation everything is changeable, hence what is created must perish which means that the effect is dissolved in its cause, and the thing changes its form.

Creation after Dissolution and Dissolution after Creation, in this way the system goes on with the influence of the Supreme Being (Rigveda 10-82-6). God is the Creator, Sustainer and Destroyer of the Universe (Atharvaveda 10-8-11). This system is beginning-less and Endless.

The creation, sustenance, mobilization and governance

of so many wonderful striking objects cannot be carried on by anyone except God, who is an intelligent designer, who knows His art, who has the capacity of the accomplishment, and who works with a set of purpose.

As the soul is an infinitesimal entity so it cannot create the vast universe, moreover the self *i.e.* the soul cannot give or get the reward of its own action with justice.

In creation of the Universe utilization of all the three eternal entities are manifested otherwise there can never be any use of these eternal trinities.

Everyone knows that the function of the eyes is to see. In the same way of what use would the knowledge, activity, and power of creating the world be in God, other than that of creating? Nothing else! Just as sight is the natural function of the eyes, so are the creations of the world, the free gift of all souls and promoting the well-being of all the natural attributes of God.

With existence of the creation, the self (the soul) gets its material body. The soul is rewarded fruits of its actions. And the Prakriti serves/helps as the medium for the soul, hence the greatest achievement of human life is to attain "Emancipation" i.e. to get rid of extreme pains, sorrows and miseries. Hence the creation of the Universe is a must.

With His capability, God creates all material world and immerses them in their own subtle entities at the time of final destruction of the Universe.

In the material world, the materialistic body is the means of attaining "Moksha" i.e. "Emancipation" or Liberation or "Salvation" of the Soul. (Atharvaveda: 1-31-3).

विश्वस्य भुवनस्य राजाः

"Wishvasya Bhuvanasya Rajah" (Rigveda 5-85-3)

i.e. God is the Lord of the whole world.

साकं सूर्यं जनयद्यामुषसम्

"Sakam Suryam Janayan Dyamushasam" (Rigveda 6-30-5) i.e..

God has created the sun, the illuminated world in an instance and He alone is the creator of this universe. He is one without a second.

य इमे द्यावा पृथिवी जनान्

"Ya Ime Dyava Prithivi Janan" (Rigveda 4-56-3) Means that God has created the universe.

तत्पृथिवीमप्रथय दस्तम्ना उत द्याम्

"Tat Prithivimaprathayastadastamna Uta Dyama" (Rigveda 8-89-5).

(Atharvaveda. 13-2, mantras 1 to 46) all these imply that God alone has created the Universe.

In Atharvaveda 8-5-9, mantras from 1 to 26 have the same meaning i.e. God alone is the creator of the Universe and He creates this form the material cause of the Universe called "Prakriti".

Jada and Chetana i.e. Conscious and Unconscious (Insensate) things:

There are only two things in this universe, which are Jada and Chetana. Jada is one in number that is the material cause of the universe called 'the matter' or 'Prakriti' whereas the second things is Chetana, which are two in number i.e. One God, and soul.

Jada and Chetana both are the Hindi words used for insensate, unconscious things and conscious, thing respectively. For example table (or anything made of any material) is insensate whereas God and the Soul are conscious things. Jada means unconscious or without knowledge or insensate thing whereas Chetana has knowledge. The matter or the Prakriti i.e. the material cause of the universe is called Jada, as it has no sense or

knowledge. Our materialistic body is Jada whereas the soul is a Chetana thing. Because of existence of the soul, our body looks like Chetana or living. There is no feeling in Jada Vastu, but Chetana Vastu has feelings. All living creatures have feelings of pain and pleasure, as there is a Chetana Shakti (Power) to experience it whereas Jada Vastu has nothing to feel anything. Jada Vastu cannot do anything, as there is no Chetana Shakti to experience it.

Of course! Prakriti (i.e. material cause of the universe) is Jada thing or insensate thing hence anything made of the Prakriti must be Jada. Many modern philosophers say that materialistic things that cannot be seen with flashy eyes are not actually Jada but they have some spiritualistic characters. Man cannot know or understand these things. But these comments are baseless. Not a single thing is created from anything, which has no cause. Even God cannot create anything from "Shoonya" i.e. that is non-existence. God also has created this universe from Prakriti. Scientists agree to this formula that nothing is created from non-existence material.

In short in this universe everything is Jada Vastu except God and souls. In our body only the soul is Chetana. Yes! Body, mind etc are Jada. One thing to be kept in mind is that a soul (An Infinitesimal Chetana Tattwa) cannot do anything without the materialistic body which is its medium to take any action. One more thing is that souls without body reside in God's supervision hence the beliefs about ghosts, witchcraft, bad-omens, demons, devils, monsters, rascals and wandering spirits etc. is absolutely false. No such things exist.

Only God who is Self-Existence-All-Intelligence-All-Blissful can do all his duties without any materialistic body, incarnation or medium, as he is Omnipresent, Omnipotent and Omniscient.

God's Personal Original Name : AUM

God is One so His personal and original name should be one. According to the Vedic literature and other "A'rsha" Granthas (authoritative literature) God's most loveable and personal name is said to be ओ३म् "AUM" which is pronounced as "OM".

The question that is frequently asked by many people:

"What is the original or personal name of God and why should one believe that"?

Here one thing is to be borne in mind and that is "Anything, which has many, attributes—actions—nature may be called by many names, though it has only one personal name. In the same way God has many names according to his attributes, actions and characteristics but his personal or original and most famous name is said to be one, which is "OM". The word "OM" is formed by three letters i.e. A+U+M and letters A and U when combined, its pronunciation becomes "O" hence A+U+M is pronounced "OM" which represents Yajna, Yoga and Dharma.

AUM creates, AUM sustains, AUM dissolves, the whole universe,

AUM is God's the most appropriate Name, sung in prose and verse.

Letters 'A', 'U' and 'M' constitute the Akshara, AUM the Imperishable,

All that was, all that is and all that will be is AUM the only Adorable.

'A' signifies the ruler of Universe, Sovereign and the Omniscient Being.

Self-Lustrous, Radiant of all Galaxies and the

Omnipresent Being.

'U' is Upholder of all Planets and Stars, Life Provider—the Omnipotent Being, while 'M' is for all true Knowledge, Universal Bliss and Ever lasting being.

Also 'A' denotes Brahama the Creator and 'U' for Vishnu—the Preserver, And 'M' for Mahesh—the Dissolver, thus AUM signifies the All Controller.

While pronouncing AUM at first 'A' opens vocal organ indicating Creation, The 'U' sustains the word that is Preserver and 'M' closing lips is Dissolution.

Vedas the Scriptures of true knowledge, describe AUM and its attributes, AUM is Formless, the personification of Existence, Intelligence and Bliss. AUM is Almighty, Just, Benevolent, Unborn, Infinite and Endless, Unchangeable, Incomparable, Undecaying, Fearless and Beginningless.

When the soul gets human body by its virtues and God's Grace,

It's gifted with intellect to find right path to run life's race.

His set goals are Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha's achievement,

Recitation of AUM concentrating on its attributes leads to fulfillment.

(Poem by Shri Dharmveer Gulati-USA)

"AUM" is the highest name of God; it is composed of three letters AUM (as described earlier). This one name comprises many other names of God. Thus, briefly—

"A" stand for Viraat, Agni and Vishwa, etc.

"U" stands for Hiranyagarbha, Vaayu and Tejas, etc., and

"M" stands for I'shwara, Aaditya and ~~Prajna,~~ etc.

It is clearly explained in the Vedas and other true shastras, that wherever they treat of God; all these names stand for Him. [Light of Truth: Chapter 1]

The Vedic and other Holy texts are in support of this view, here are a few quotations from the Holy Vedas and the Upanishads in support of the statement that "AUM" (OM)

is the highest name of God.

The Vedic Eloquent says:

ओ३म् क्रतो स्मर

"OM Krato Smara" (Yajurveda 40/15) means "Oh! Energetic man, (Assiduous man) always remember the name of God that is "OM".

ओ३म् खं ब्रह्म

OM Kham Brahma" (Yajurveda 40/17) means "OM" is the Great God who is Omnipresent (Like ether).

तस्य वाचकः प्रणव

"Tasya Vaachakah Pranavah" (Yogashastra, Chapter 1/27) means God's personal name is "AUM".

The Chhandogya Upanishad: Mantra[6] 1 says that "He alone, whose name is AUM, who is Immortal, is worthy of our adoration and none other."

The Mandukya Upanishad, 1/1, says: —" All the Vedas and the shastras declare "OM" as the primary and natural name of God. All other are His secondary names."

The Kathopanishada: 7/15, says that "He, whom all the Vedas declare worthy of homage, Whom all devotion and righteous actions lead to, and for Whose realisation, the life of Brahmacharya (chastity) is lead, is called AUM."

The Vedic and other Holy texts are in support of this view, that the Primary and Personal name of God is "AUM", which is pronounced as "OM".

It is said in the Kathopanishad, (7/15), that "He, Whom all the Vedas declare worthy of homage, to whom all devotion and righteous actions lead, and for whose realization, the life of chastity i.e. Brahmacharya leads, is called OM."

There have to be innumerous name of God according to his attributed-actions or characteristics as Omkar, Ishwara, Paramatma, Bhagwan, Brahma, Vishnu, Mahesha, Ganapati, Ganesh, Indra, Mitra, Varun, Agni and so on. All these are attributed names of God.

"In other words, these names signify God in prayers,

meditations, communions, or where such adjectives as Omnipresent, Omniscient, Holy, Eternal and Creator of the Universe qualify them. Whilst, where the things under discussion are mentioned as created, protected or sustained, disintegrated or where such qualifying words as finite, visible are used, they cannot be taken to signify God; because He is neither subject to such changes as evolution or destruction, nor is He finite or visible".

In Vedas alone there are many names of God according to subject and contents! But, from time to time, place to place, nation to nation and from their own beliefs and faiths, the Bhaktas (worshippers), Sufis, Saints, Gurus and other religious people who had experienced God's bliss in their own[7] ways, have added many attributed and imaginary names for Him. According to there circumstances, place, time and beliefs etc., God is pronounced as: God, Holy Ghost, Holy Spirit, Lord, Allah, Khuda, Khoda, Khudaaya, Rabba, Sai, Naath, Satnaam, Omkara, Vaheguru, Maalik, Parvardigaar, Maulaa etc. But really speaking, by listening or chanting the "OM" one enjoys and experiences inner-peace or Anand. God is One hence His loveable, adorable and Peace-giving name according to all A'rsha Granthas and religious books is nothing but "OM."

"Om" is a cosmic sound, Universal music, which exists in the Universe forever. The Yogi or enlightened souls experience this Cosmic Vibration in transcendental state of Samaadhi. To hear this incredible universal sound of music, in other words to experience the incredible bliss of God, one (truly dedicated person called a Bhakta) has to meditate with clean and pure mind, which cannot be explained in words.

Karm Siddhaant :
The Law of Action and Reaction

Any extraordinary effort, done by the soul with body, mind and Indriyas (principle of subtle entity i.e. internal and external senses) for attaining pleasures and to get rid of pains, is called कर्म "Karm" or "Karma". *(Aryoddeshyaratna-mala: No. 48 by Mahr'shi Dayananda Saraswati)*

"Karm" or 'Karma' means 'Action'. It is not possible that any action goes in waste without giving its fruit to the doer. It is eternal scientific truth that "Action and Reaction are equal and opposite." Doer does an action and its fruit is given by Almighty God and goes to the doer itself. In simple words "man acts and God reacts." A human being cannot avoid actions because he is compelled to act by his own nature.

People perform actions for the sake of happiness, but they do not become happy or manage to end their misery. Further they suffer again and again as a consequence of their acts. Vidura asks honorable sage Maitreya—(*Bhagwatam:* 3-5-2) Why this is so? The existence of this question, even in ancient times, indicates that how action and the result of action are related has always been a mystery, uncertain and puzzling. Lord Krishna says in the Geeta that *"Gahana Karmano Gatih"* i.e. the true nature of action is inscrutable.

The Geeta says: "You have control on your karma but not on the fruits." Lord Krishna explains here that man can do karma, which is in his hands, but the fruits of that karma are in God's hand. In other words, 'Once man has done any 'Karma' willingly or unwillingly, purposely or ignorantly and mentally, verbally or physically, but for the results he/she has to depend on God's judgement i.e. time, place and situation.

Action being insentient, it is not capable of deciding the result; the result is always decided by God, a superconscious principle according to set laws of the nature. The Vedic philosophy says that karma is a seed that bears its fruit within and only the sower of course reaps that fruit.

According to the law of Karma, sooner or later we have to reap what we have sown. Most of our obstacles are the result of our own actions —whose consequences we must face in the form of our present situations and trials. Yet at the same time we are not just at the mercy of our past actions. The A'ptas constantly tell us, our past actions are less important than what we are doing in the present. In the words of great sage Vasishtha, "The present is indefinitely more potent than the past."

This theory of subject of "Karma-Siddhaant i.e. the theory of action and reaction" is very vast, mysterious, confused and complicated hence no man can understand it properly and completely. Man can understand some of the important things with his/her limited intellect. What is important is to understand that what is good and what are bad deeds, and try to get rid of the bad deeds, then only can one benefit from life.

"Man proposes, God disposes". This oft-quoted saying suggests that ultimately it is God who decides the outcome of our efforts at achieving our aspirations and goals. Could this be true?

We talk about the injustice in this world. All around us we see the unrighteous flourish while the virtuous suffer. Often, notorious criminals get away, the innocent get punished. The indulgent remain healthy and the cautious suffer from diseases. The idle get rich and the industrious remain poor. These anomalies could conveniently be explained away as good and bad luck, but what about glaring inequities at birth? One infant is born with high IQ, good looks and health; another is born with physical, economic and emotional disadvantages. If God is the final

arbitrator of our destiny, He must be a very partial God indeed! To a believer in a Just and Benevolent God such gross inequalities defy explanation.

The Vedic scriptures, however, contend that man's desires, ambitions and efforts are not disposed of by God; they are disposed of by man's own Karma, past actions. Is karma then more powerful than God is? God is all-powerful; He can do anything and everything. However, normally, God does not intervene in man's material destiny, and hence, karma holds sway.[8] God does not even judge man's karma, for karma is self-judging. God has established the law of karma under the control of Maya. His external energy, and the law is precise, strict, uncompromising, relentless and thoroughly impartial.

So, if there is unexpected suffering, if there is failure despite efforts at achieving success, know that it is due to one's past karma, not God's displeasure. God is not to be blamed. If there is an unexpected windfall, that, too, is the result of one's good karma at work.

'As you sow, so shall you reap' is an eternal law. Any action good, bad or indifferent, yields corresponding fruit. Reward and punishment is portioned out according to the nature of each person's karma. Righteous action brings rich rewards and exceptionally good actions (Nishkaam karma निष्काम कर्म) takes one to heaven, Swarga Loka. Bad deeds result in problems, failures and miseries. Extraordinary bad deeds result in one being born in the form of a lower species. One's existence could be filled with torment.

Our actions in previous births determine the choice of our parents. The Chhandogya Upanishad (5-10) says, "Those who are of good conduct will enter into an elevated or superior womb, and those who are of evil conduct will be born into the womb of a dog or swine or an outcast". No one can get anything unless he earns it. A person may accumulate enormous wealth through means fair or foul, but he will be able to use only that what he deserves. Inspite of

thousands of books in his library, he will not be able to read any that he does not deserve. And this deserving is produced by past karma.

Retribution is the guiding principle of the karma doctrine. Retribution is awarded by our karmas, not for our karmas. A true believer feels no bitterness when misfortune befalls him and he blames no one, not even God. Such an attitude should not be mistaken as fatalistic resignation, for in reality it is wholesome, it promotes acceptance of one's situation and it inspires edification.

It may be argued that because everything is pre-destined, we have no freedom of action. It is true that man cannot escape the fruits of 'Prarabdha karma'-past karma now fructifying—but destiny does not dictate man's current behavior. Man has the discriminative powers, though limited yet sufficient and the freedom to act as he pleases. If therefore, he acts according to spiritual injunctions, he can create good karmas to reap corresponding benefits in future lives. The law of karma is optimistic and progressive because it is well within one's control to improve his future both materially and spiritually. Karma is also one of the means to "Moksha", liberation.

Karma teaches us that in the lives of humans there is an absolute natural justice that cannot be violated and it will always prevail. It would therefore be prudent for us to always remember that though we may be able to circumvent man-made laws, still we cannot escape the law of karma.

Karma is a law of cause and effect, or moral intelligibility. Cause and effect must be equal, as you sow so shall you reap. In other words the love, kindness, anger, hatred and such other feelings that flow out to others from our hearts will be invariably returned to us. Our noble thoughts, feelings and deeds bring to us pleasant experiences while evil thoughts and deeds cause sorrows and sufferings. Nothing is accidental; everything has a cause.

Karma theory is not fatalism; nor is it any authoritarian

agency denying recognition of individual effort. In reality it places our own evolution in our own hands by giving ample opportunity through many lives, Janma, to refine our thoughts and actions. The quality of all our actions depends on the vasnas thạt predominate and rule our thought processes. As we think, so do we act. All ego-centric, desire-directed activities lead the doer to new experiences, accumulating ever more impressions or tendencies, goading us to acquire, possess, keep, spend, enjoy and preserve what has been gained. Vasanas are the psychological expressions of potential Karmas, which never die, but seek new fields of action for their consumption.

Karma is a continuum due to its action-reaction chain-effect, making us live through cycle of birth, old age, disease and death. We are bonded to our action and their results. To deliver ourselves from the painful ordeal of our acts of passion—lust, greed, anger. Shri Krishna in Bhagavad Geeta talks about Karma-Yoga, the path of right action. It has three conditions.

First, work must be carried out in a spirit of dedication and selflessness.

Second, it must be beneficial to the society at large.

Third, never let the fruits of action agitate your mind. We must endeavory to preserve Dharma, the eternal values of life, for the continuance of human existence. In the climate of detachment, man's creative personality flowers to its maximum potential.

Karmas can be divided into many ways, but according to the Vedic philosophy and Aarsha Granthas, there are four kinds of Karmas:

कर्माऽशुक्लाऽकृष्णां योगिनस्त्रिविधमितरेषाम्

"Karmaashuklaakrishnam Yoginastrividhamitareshaam"

(Yog Darshana 4/7)

(1) *Nishkaam Karmas*—The Punya-karmas done with the intention of attaining Moksha i.e. Emancipation e.g. To study the Vedic literature etc., service to mankind,

worshipping God, spreading knowledge etc.

(2) *Punya Karmas*—The Karmas done with the intention of acquiring worldly pleasures, such as to give donations, performing Yajnas, service of mankind, protecting weaker sections of the society etc. When karma and intention both are good, they are Punya karma.

(3) *Mixed Karmas*—Mixture of some Punya (Virtuous acts) and some Paap-Karmas (Sinful acts), such as in farming. One gets a good harvest but it is a fact that some insects are being killed. When action is good but intention is bad and vice-versa, then the karma is said to be 'mixed Karma'.

(4) *Paap Karmas*—Sinful bad actions, by which others receive pain such as; to steal, tell lies, to rape etc. In this category action and its intention both are bad, hence they are said to be Paap-Karma. For these the doer gets the body of pig, dog, fish, donkey, monkey etc. According to the standard of one's Karmas. In the Vedic philosophy, it is advised to do the first three Karmas and/also strongly advised not to do the fourth one. Hence one should never do these Paap Karma.

The second point of view about Karmas:

(1) *Kriyamaan Karmas*—These Karmas are those which are being done in the present time.

(2) *Sanchita Karma or Samashtigat Karma*—The second level is the one of the past actions that are waiting to produce a reaction. This is called Sanchita Karma, the latent Karma.

(3) *Prarabdha*—The third level is the level of the past actions whose reactions are fully manifesting, being responsible for the fruits we achieve in our present life and creating its circumstances. This is called Prarabdha Karma, active or mature Karma also known as Bhaagya, Naseeb or Kismat in Hindi and luck, fortune, fate or Destiny in English.

We all come into this world with a certain destiny, which unfolds, as we go through life. Opportunities given to

man also form a part of our destiny.

One more thing to be borne in mind is that "No one gets more than his/her Destiny or Bhaagya or Prarabdha (i.e. proper fruits of his/her Karmas done i.e. the results of his past efforts) and before Time." Hence everyone shall get his/her appropriate Karma-Phal in time. There is no delay or ignorance in God's judgement, because God is Omnipresent, Omnipotent and omniscient.

Results of Karmas can also be divided into three categories such as—(a) Karma-Phal, (b) Result, and (c) Effect. Karma-Phal goes directly to the doer. Result is connected with the material and lastly the effect is to be suffered by someone upon whom deeds are done. For example a thief has stolen an article from the house of Mr. B. Here the thief has done his action of stealing. In this case, while "Karma-Phal" will be experienced by the thief, in accordance with God's eternal laws of nature, Mr. B is suffering the effect of thief's action. Lastly, the result is that an article has disappeared from Mr. B's house.

The most accepted truth is that "As you sow so shall you reap". Once a person has performed his actions, bad or good, the results are never lost. The Law of Motion states that action, Effect or Karma is equal for all. "Action and reaction are equal and opposite". The Vedic doctrine of Karma is its moral equivalent. Time factor is always there. It is not possible to get the fruits of all actions at the earliest, because every seed takes its own time to ripe. We [the soul] are finite hence have limited knowledge and do not know the exact time for the result of all our actions.

Fruits of all Karmas manifest in three different ways, such as Jaati, Aayu and Bhoga.

सति मूले तद्विपाको जात्यायुर्भोगाः

"Sati Moole Tadvipaako Jaatyaayurbhogaahaa"

(Yog Darshan: 2/13)

As stated earlier that Life-State, Life-Period and Life-Experience (Jaati-Aayu-Bhog) are the parameters of our

deeds. The moment man acts [mentally, verbally or corporeal] he is fixed under the laws of Divinity i.e. God decides and makes the proper and suitable arrangements and creates environments for the fruits for its actions. When, where and how? no one knows except the Benevolent Supreme God.

The fruits of our past or present karmas depend upon these four conditions which are place, time, cause and object. When they exist, the fruit of our actions ripe and spring out. It is said that the reactions are hidden in its actions.

God has fitted an important automatic instrument i.e. Chitta[9] (commonly known as mind) in our Antah-Karan or inner faculties, in which all impressions of our deeds (present and past lives) are registered continuously. If good deeds exceed bad deeds, life becomes pleasant, and when bad deeds are more than good deeds, life becomes miserable. When they both (good and bad deeds) remain equal the life becomes a mix of good and bad.

At the time of death, the soul resides in God with its subtle body in which all impressions i.e. Sanskaras remain registered, and next birth is given accordingly as Jaati-Aayu-Bhog by the divine power [GOD]. There are numerous races like man, animals, birds, insects etc. God only knows the Life-State, Life-Period and Life-Experience i.e. "Jaati-Aayu-Bhog" of all souls.

[* As said earlier, when an individual is born, the soul comes with a subtle body, with its supragenetic code or "Jaati-Aayu-Bhog". Humans alone have the freedom of Will and Action while all other species do not enjoy this freedom.]

The idea of good or evil, and of vice and virtue, is assigned to the extent one is provided with freedom to will and work.

It is again the freedom that imposes responsibility. Man alone is thus responsible for his good or bad actions. The

Quest of religions, morals and ethics are applicable to him alone, and to no other species to this extent.

The average age of a man is nearly 100 years, If he lives his life according to the laws of nature, it can be increased or decreased that depends upon one's attitude towards life. God has provided all essential things for livings being e.g. vegetables, fruits, foods, herbals, etc. When good deeds exceed bad deeds it is certain that the soul will get his next birth in the human race, and result in animal races if the deeds are the reverse.

In the Universe there are infinite worlds, in which exist many nations, jungles, states, cities, villages, animals, birds, sea world, and man. It is his Sanskaras that force him to take birth in a king's palace, poor man's hut, an ordinary house, all depends upon his entire past. Someone is born handsome/ beautiful, fair, wheatish, black, tall, short, healthy, weak, retarded, sick, etc, hence there is always one or other weakness or defect or impurity in a man because of his entire past. What is received because of one's own cumulative actions is called "Fortune", "Luck", and "Destiny". Man is the builder/architect/designer/maker of his destiny. What happens to us directly or indirectly is the result of our actions. We are responsible for an action and it is we who have to face the consequences. The consequences of all actions have to be experienced by the doer alone.

One question arises here. "Why to expect fruits when one sows seeds? There is a nice biological answer. This is because fruits furnish seeds and seeds come from the fruits and fruits come from the seeds; and the chain goes on. Whether seeds come first or the fruits is a Quest that can never be answered. It is a closed circular chain, each one preceding the other. Why do we want to be rewarded when we do certain actions? The answer is simple, because the reward would encourage us to take further action. Action leads to rewards, and rewards to actions and the chain should never come to an end.

Of course, actions are like seeds, which bear fruits. Fruits accompany thorns.

"An effect presupposes a cause"

(*Vaisheshika Darshan*: 4-1-3).

The actions reveal our innermost nature. Man is known by his actions. Actions also transform one's nature. Actions thus promote and demote a man. And therefore, we are asked to be very cautious about our actions.

"Karma" means "Action." Every action or thought determines a reaction. In the physical world, the weight of a body creates an opposite force in the ground. At the emotional level, our attitude toward someone (or something) is, consciously or not, is reflected back, the other person having the tendency to behave exactly according to our feeling towards him/her. At the mental level this is the well-known dynamic interaction between the commanding conscious mind and the executing sub-conscious mind.

In Yoga Tradition, Karma has a much deeper meaning, which, to a certain extent only, is related to the western idea of Destiny or Fate. In this vision, Karma is the accumulation of our past actions. These past actions (Triggering Actions) are causes which determine other actions (triggered reactions) in exact accordance with the charge of the corresponding past actions.

Being a seed, Karma does not fructify immediately after it is sown. It requires the fertile soil of self-arrogation (when a person arrogates to himself/herself the action done in a state of spiritual ignorance) and the nature of similar actions to help its growth and fruition. The absence of self-arrogation keeps the person unaffected by the actions done in that state of consciousness. Self-arrogation is thus the soil without which the seed of Karma cannot grow.

The innumerable seeds launched into the Universe by desire, aversion, love, hatred, etc., and the actions caused by these feelings, in the same way as all material seeds, tend —

given favourable conditions—to produce energetic entities of the same species as that of the parents who have transmitted the seed. In order that the seed should be sown, it is in no way necessary that our feelings, intentions or thoughts should be materialized in actions. All our subconscious activity is a powerful source from which are thrown out these seeds. Therefore, it matters not only what you do but also what you are.

There is not a blade of grass, not a grain of sand which is not a sower of Karmic seeds by the activity of its physical and psychic life, peculiar to its species, which we must in no way imagine as similar to our own. Each of our physical, emotional or mental movements is the fruit of causes coming from the whole Universe and has its repercussions in the whole Universe. For instance, if you do a bad or good action towards someone, this triggers a reaction, which will be equally, bad or good, and which will be directed toward yourself. In this way, you experience the happiness or suffering that you have produced to other living beings. The paramount value of this subtle mechanism is that we learn and accumulate a certain ineffable wisdom that pushes us towards becoming good and perfect. Of course, this is a very simple and mechanical explanation; what really happens has a complexity and profoundness that overcomes even the most imaginative mind.

Karma is the storage of our actions, recorded with exactitude in a special memory. These recordings are like time bombs that will explode in the future. The sight of an object, the thinking of a thought, the performance of an act, even though very transitory, leave a complex trace in the Cosmic Memory (Aakasha) which lasts beyond time, and leaves also an imprint in the sub-conscious mind. This sub-conscious imprint is called Sanskaras (Dynamic Impulse). The character of a man, his moral or mental status, his "talents", his "likes" and "dislikes", all are determined by his Sanskaras, which are the product of his Karma (past

actions). The Sanskaras transmigrate from incarnation to incarnation, being never lost. They act like seeds that will develop according to a specific pattern, which characterize each of them and which is closely related to the charge of the action that produced them.

For instance, the pattern of development of a kidney-bean seed is to give birth to a plant having all the characteristics of the kidney-bean plant. This is the Karma of the kidney-bean seed. From this simple example you can understand how the Karma seeds from our subconscious (Samskaras) give birth to circumstances identically similar to those which generated them. In other words, if you do good, you will receive good, and vice-versa.

All of us intrinsically possess two tendencies, i.e. good and evil; you may as well call them desirable and undesirable, or helpful and unhelpful, Appreciatory and Derogatory. The theism is based on the acceptance of a fundamental principle; Whatever is good must be encouraged and whatever is evil must be resisted.

This encouragement comes through rewards, and resistance through punishments, the former gets manifested in what we call pleasure and the latter in what we call pain. Virtue and vice are other terms for good and evil.

Rewards and punishments are given by someone who is higher in rank to encourage a person to tread on the right path, and be safeguarded from being distracted to a wrong one. This is known as the fruit of action. We are the doers, whereas the fruit of our action comes from above, that is from the Benevolent Supreme. We are free to act, but He is to judge our actions and accordingly decide what is best for us.

Another important aspect is that the sequence of the triggered reactions is not necessarily the same as the sequence of the triggering actions. Some Karmas (actions) trigger a very quick reaction, others need a long or very long time to trigger a reaction. The time of "ripening" of the fruit

of an action has nothing to do with the time when that action was done, but with its nature only.

The Law of echoes is valid both for triggering actions and for triggered reactions. We can say that the echo is like a multiple reflection of an action. The echoes also trigger reactions. Considering the temporal sequence of actions, each action has a feedback effect (going backward in time and therefore affecting all the latent Karmic seeds that lay in wait) and a direct effect (going forward in time).

The result of an action is greatly influenced by associated ideas. When, for instance, a person practices certain austerities and desires that their fruits should go to some particular person, for whom he performs them. It is a blind-faith and blind-belief. It must be kept in mind that "Only Doer gets the fruit of his Karmas". The Karmas-Phal (Fruits of actions i.e. rewards or punishments) cannot be returned or exchanged. Once actions done the fruits have to be borne by the doer. The science says— "Action and Reaction are equal and opposite."

कर्तुं अकर्तुं अन्यथाः कर्तुं यः स्वतन्त्र सा कर्त्ता

"Kartum Akartum Anyathaa Kartum Yah Swatantra Sa Karta"

means he who is free to do, not to do or even do the same in reverse way, is called the doer.

When you understand these important aspects of the Law of Karma and its Karma-Phal, you will realize that there is no destiny besides the human will. Everybody gets exactly what he/she deserves. This is a Cosmic and Inflexible Law. There is a perfect justice, even when our limited human understanding "sees" an "injustice". The human beings build their own destiny through their actions, thoughts and intentions. If these have a positive charge, the destiny will be positive. If the actions, thoughts or intentions have a predominantly negative charge, the destiny will be negative. Notice that you do not necessarily have to do bad things to others for having a bad destiny: people usually do bad things

to themselves, and this is enough for creating a negative Karma. An important thing here is the intention. Remember, any Cosmic Entities (Insensate Jada Matters), can never ever punish a creature for being "bad" and never reward it for being "good". God is one who gives the fruits of one's actions.

In the light of this Law, man sows seeds (Actions) that will sprout later. But the ignorant man continuously sows seeds and pays no attention to their growth. He does not even know what he is doing. He does not even know that what he is doing will have a repercussion. Nevertheless, this does not make the seeds of his actions sterile, on the contrary, they sprout and ripen, and then each must eat the sweet or sour fruits of his own field. Not only our actions, but also our omissions become our destiny. Even the things that we have failed to accomplish trigger reactions that may develop into events of grave concern. Our fate deposits itself insidiously in our lives through our innumerable tiny movements, thoughts, intentions, habits, the scarcely conscious actions and neglects of everyday life. Then, through our unconscious choices and rejections, it gradually thickens until the solution reaches a saturation point and is ripe for crystallization. A slight turbulence is then enough, and what has long been forming as a cloudily liquid, something indefinite, merely holding itself in readiness, is instantaneously precipitated as destiny, bursts open crystal-clear and hard, and reveals to our astonished eye its internal store. Then we are thunderstruck. Then we ask ourselves: "What have I done to deserve this? Why me?" What for a long time has been built within in secrecy, unpredictably unloads itself with great power into the outer world and carries us with it: the machinery of Karma starts its inexorable work into the scenery that we ourselves, most of the time unconsciously, have minutely prepared. We suddenly discover that we are trapped in an inescapable net, woven and tailored by ourselves, into which we have

thoughtlessly delivered ourselves, and which leads us to phenomena of unknown and often uncontrollable proportions. And the tragic beauty of this is that everything seems as if it would come from outside, as if we would have no choice, as if we would be the victims of an unfair judgement, as if the whole world would turn against us in a sudden outburst of capriciousness.

We live in a mysterious world with our conscious and subconscious mind and belief system. They are permanently creating the "reality" in which we live, manifesting that enigmatic power called Maya Shakti (Natural Powers), through which we see the world not the way it is, but the way we want it, consciously or not, to be. This is the same power that the Supreme Being uses to create and manifest the worlds, and to hide it from them. You have to see and understand deeply this fundamental truth before attempting to understand the laws of Karma.

"Chitta" is the storage of our actions, recorded with exactitude in a special memory. These recordings are like time bombs that will explode in the future. The sight of an object, the thought process, the performance of an act, even though very transitory, leave a complex trace in the Cosmic Memory (Akasha), which lasts beyond time, and leaves also an imprint in the subconscious mind. This subconscious imprint is called "Sanskar" (dynamic impulse). The character of a man, his moral or mental status, his "talents", his "likes" and "dislikes", all are determined by his Sanskaras, which are the product of his Karma (past actions). The Sanskaras transmigrate from incarnation to incarnation, never being lost. They act like seeds that will develop according to a specific pattern, which characterizes each of them and which is closely related to the charge of the action that produced them.

"Our present is a resultant of our entire past, and again with our accomplishments in the present, we shall be moving on to the next life.

When a man is born, he is born with two heredities, one that is biological, which passes from father to son, from one generation to the other. The other is the intrinsic heredity, which the soul carries from one life to the other. The two heredities work simultaneously in perfect harmony without any conflict. The intrinsic heredity is carried by a similar supragenetic code, made of non-matter, and existing as a non-material envelope round the soul. This non-material is known as the subtle body of the soul, just as the genes and genetic codes constitute the gross body of the same. Through this supragenetic code in the subtle body are preserved those supracharacteristics, which the soul carries from one body to the next, one after the other. As one passes from one life to other they remain dormant, or become active, may be altered, or replaced as the case may be. The soul carries as if the final resultant of these supracharacteristics from one stage to the other."

"When one dies, the biological envelop is left over here, and the soul within the supragenetic envelop (i.e. with its subtle body) passes on to its next life carrying its intrinsic heredity. The life continues on like this." [*Man and his religion*]

It is important to know that besides the karmic debts, the human being has free will. Free Will permits intelligent choices. Even if you have to suffer the reactions of a "Bad Sinful Karmas", these choices can make a big difference as to how these reactions will manifest, and even IF they will manifest at all. Free Will is not the same for everybody (it depends on Karma), but even an extraordinarily "Bad Sinful Karmas" give possibilities to exert free will at certain crucial points in life.

Counter-acting latent Karmas: Now, we come to the idea of "Changing the Destiny". Generally speaking, the ordinary human being supports passively and unconsciously the consequences of his Karmas (Actions). In this state of consciousness, he/she unconsciously generates other Karmas

(Actions), which trigger correspondent reactions, and so on. Apparently, this vicious circle has no end.

The Yoga Tradition puts forth clearly that the human being has the power and the right to change his destiny and find an exit from this vicious circle. This is called "escaping the wheel of reincarnations". Karma itself is called "The Wheel of Eternal Returning".

We have seen that the state of Karma, when it is asserting itself or is about to assert itself is called mature Karma. Once this state is reached nothing and nobody can stop it from running its course, nothing can impede its fruition.

As opposed to this, there is the other state in which, the circumstances being extremely unfavourable for its growth, Karma remains dormant (latent Karma). The fruition of such Karma only can be destroyed by a counter-action such as charity, spiritual practice, etc. The preventive measures against the fruition of latent Karma are like inoculation to safeguard a person against the attack of a certain disease. And just as inoculation, though effective if it were done long before the attack, is yet useless when the attack has come, i.e., when the Karma has attained maturity. The mature Karma is like a boulder slipped from the top of a mountain, which knows no obstruction and must have its course till it reaches the flat land.

The destruction, or burning, of Karma is one of the most essential antecedent conditions of enlightenment. But this is neither the only condition, nor is this in itself enlightenment.

The main purpose of the Law of Karma is learning. If, through understanding and consciously changing your life, you learn a lesson, the Karma that was supposed to teach you that particular lesson through suffering is automatically burned.

Remember that Karma is the main cause of our existence in this world. An individual is not only affected by

his Karma, but also by that of the community or race to which he belongs (Collective Karma). A good or bad Karma is equally undesirable for he who yearns to liberation, because it enchains the human being on the Wheel of Eternal Returning. In Yoga vision, Karma is "Good" when it permits the human being to realize the spiritual evolution, and it is "Bad" when the opposite is the case. "Bad Karma" means that a lot of lessons have to be learned; "Good Karma" means enough lessons were learned, so the human being can start the conscious work of inner growth. The advanced Yoga-students learn to eliminate any kind of Karma. Only in this way will he be totally free of any links with the inferior levels of consciousness, being able to merge continuously into the Eternal Bliss of the Supreme Consciousness. From then on, all his Actions will be free of any karmic charge. These actions can trigger reactions, but only if the Yoga-students desires so. An enlightened master has complete control over the fruition of his Karmas (actions).

In Vedic philosophy, 'sin' is an action, which is not in accordance with the superior Cosmic Harmony, in other words that which is not in accordance with Yama and Niyama is surely punishable. In any condition, God never excuses or forgives anyone's sin/sins.

["Yama, Niyama, Aaasana, Praanaayaama, Pratyaahaar, Dhaaranaa, Dhyaana and Samaadhi" are eight steps or accessories of the Yoga. The term "Yoga" means communion with God. (Yoga Darshan: Saadhan paada # 29)]

Important: It's an eternal "Karmic Law" or " the law of action and reaction" that "No karma is defused without giving fruits to the doer". Then how can God forgive anyone's action? He is Omniscient hence He cannot break His own laws!

The science of Yoga. provides the necessary methodology of learning through understanding and conscious becoming, therefore of changing the Destiny and

experiencing the remaining fruits of our Karma in an intelligent and superior way. In this respect, Yoga Sutra, the famous treatise on Yoga written by the Sage Patanjali, says:

हेयं दुःखमनागतम्

"Heyam Dhukhamanaagatam" (Saadhan-Pada 16)

Which means, "The future suffering can and must be avoided." The Science through which this is possible is called Yoga.

A general methodology through which the human being can avoid the Wheel of Karma is called Nishkaam Karma i.e., action (Karma) without (Nish) attachment (Kaam), and i.e., spontaneous action that comes smoothly, as if by it, without being "pushed".

Again, Yoga puts forth that the actual action does not create any Karma, but the Attitude with which that action is done (the arrogation to himself of the authorship of one's actions) links the human being into the painful chain of suffering. In order to avoid this, realize all your actions consecrating, through ardent yearning, their fruit to the Supreme Being, not expecting any reward or result from them and considering them as a duty that has to be done (Dharma). In this way you open yourself towards the cosmic harmony and allow the Current of the Eternal Consciousness to perform these actions through you, while you assume the role of a relay, this is conveying the corresponding action. Of a great help here is the continuous concentration upon Sahasraar, the center above the head.

The term "non-attachment" (Vairagya) best describes the spiritual condition of acting without lust of result. It is very difficult for the ordinary human being to decide on something and then to do it purely for its own sake. Yet it is precisely this attitude which is required from a Yoga-student or Yoga-Sadhak.

In this respect, there is a Cosmic Law that says: "Whatever you identify yourself with, controls you; you control whatever you dis-identify yourself with." Here,

"identification" has to be understood as ego-involvement; therefore, the lower the level of ego-involvement, the higher the level of satisfaction.

Nishkaam Karma doesn't mean to be indifferent toward the action that you perform. On the contrary, it requires maximum attention and total responsibility. Do not be afraid to perform any action when the time is ripe for it, and do not expect any results (i.e., act for the sake of the action, and not for what you may get from that action). The correct understanding of this idea is very difficult and comes in time. It is said that man has the duty to act, but the results of his actions are in God's hands.

Practical Elements in Karma Yoga:

Karma Yoga is one of the four types of classical Yoga. The other three are:

Jyana Yoga—the Yoga of intellectual knowledge.

Bhakti Yoga—the Yoga of devotion to the Supreme Consciousness.

Raja Yoga—the Yoga of mind control and meditation.

Karma Yoga is the Yoga of spontaneous and complete communion with the Supreme Divine Conscious-ness through detached action.

Detachment means non-ego involvement (freedom from the bonds of desire). Therefore Karma-Yoga requires non-ego involvement neither in action nor in detachment. In this way everything we do becomes a meditation and attunement to the Cosmic Harmony.

The ageless teachings of the "Karma Yoga" system are the following:

(1) Not even for a moment can a human being be without action. Therefore inaction or refraining from action must not be the aim of a yogi. Detached and consecrated actions are more superior to inaction.

(2) Certain actions are mandatory and therefore have to be done, but in a state of perfect detachment and consecrating their fruit to the Supreme Consciousness (God).

(3) We must neither desire nor be afraid of the fruits (results) of our detached actions.

We must consecrate these fruits to God. Consecration means offering the fruits of an action to God in a state of humbleness, it means acting for the love of God. This inner attitude of consecration implies a profound respect and attention for the action that is being performed, and a perfect detachment from its fruit. Consecration implies a higher responsibility, because now the quality of the action is a measure of the degree of love for God and of communion with the Cosmic Harmony. In the light of this teaching, no action is to be considered as being without importance, negligible or incompatible with the role we think (but don't know through direct experimentation) we have to play in this life.

(4) We must never be attached to action itself.

(5) We must never consider ourselves as being the authors of our actions. We must keep in mind that God is the one who acts through us. Therefore, before starting an action (this detail is essential), invoke with fervour the presence of God and offer Him in a state of humbleness both that action and its fruits.

(6) Any action realized in the spirit of Karma Yoga (i.e., respecting the above five precepts) does not create any Karmic chains. Karma Yoga makes a clear distinction between:

(a) The Intent of an action (the state of mind at the time of an action);

(b) The action itself;

(c) The fruits of the action;

Out of these three elements, only the intent creates new Karma (enchains us to the Wheel of Birth and Death). To avoid this, the intent has to be detached and consecrated to God. Consecration of actions: It is necessary to consecrate all major actions to God.

When you decide to offer an action and its fruits to

God, it is of paramount importance that you do that before the action starts. Consecrate the fruits of the action to God in total sincerity, without holding back anything. When you offer the fruits to God, you agree that the results of the action, which were supposed to come to you, are offered to God and you willingly give them up. The moment of offering is immediately followed by an extraordinary state of communion, of openness, of charging with a divine flux of ecstatic energy, which always manifests in your being from top to bottom (from the center above the head down to the root center). You then feel this fluid entering the crown of the skull and penetrating your being, bathing you in a radiance of divine influence. This state is the sign that God has received your offer and that you can go ahead and start the action, being sure that now God is acting through you, inspiring and guiding you all the way.

Therefore, in Karma Yoga consecration has two parts:

1. Ishwar Pranidhaan i.e. offering the fruits of an action to God before starting the action.

2. Perceiving, in a state of inner attention and receptiveness, the answer[10] that God sends us, and which means He has accepted our offer. This answer is a feeling, sometimes very soft and barely sensed, and sometimes an overwhelming state of expanded awareness, or any degree in between. The main thing here is to perceive a state of uplifting, a descent of grace from above the head up to the base of the spine. After a short time, this state fades away, but what is important is that it came upon you.

Karma Yoga introduces the formula "Learning through detached help given to others". Keep these ideas in mind:

The only truly valuable help is that through which a human being receives the teaching of how to help himself / herself. For being able to really give, you must first have.

When you help or teach others, consecrate your action to God, and let Him help that person through you. Be aware that you cannot help or teach anybody without a substantial

help from God. Therefore, in all humbleness (lack of arrogance) offer yourself as a relay through which God's help can reach that person, and "get out of the way". If the consecration is correctly performed, and if you truly become detached, the inner state of consciousness that appears then in your being is tremendously powerful. This state of consciousness changes you and the person you want to help, being at the same time a glorious proof of the existence of God and its ways. But do not be disappointed if sometimes the other person is dense or refractory to this help—this shows his / her incapacity to receive help.

The difference between compassion and pity is this: Pity is a state of passive resonance with the suffering of other person. Through pity we take over our shoulders, partially or totally, the Karma of suffering that belongs to another person. In other words, making other people's problems our own—without helping them in any way and sometimes even risking our inner development! Through pity we are Not integrated into the Cosmic Harmony.

Compassion can be defined as being the pity and the love of God. When we feel compassion, the predominant state is that of communion with the Cosmic Harmony while contemplating human suffering. When we feel compassion we are not taking over any Karma. Compassion is a mobilizing, active attitude through which we find ways to help others in the light of the Karma Yoga teachings. Compassion is purifying, therefore being great help in our inner evolution.

when we consecrate to God our pity, if is transformed into compassion.

May the infinite God, who is all truth, all-intelligence, all blissful and the innermost spirit of all out of His grace, give success and permanece to this object of mine. May God bless all and give courage to embrace truth and renounce untruth.

The path of right action purges the mind of its

accumulated vasana-dirt and lets it soar to new height of self-realisation. A true Karma-Yogin accomplishes work with single-minded devotion, accepting the work itself as his or her reward and a source of enjoyment. This is Yajna, a self-sacrificing act, which transforms life into an elevating experience.

Action must be guided by established “Dharma” as given by scriptures, by prospector, or as guided by one’s conscience.

Astrology and Astronomy

द्युतरिरिस्निदेश्च जः *"Dyuterisinnaadeshcha Jah"* is formed from the Sanskrit root term "Dyut Deeptou". From this the word "Jyotish" is proved/formed.

The geologic study of celestial bodies is called "Astrology."

The science of heavenly bodies i.e. illuminated bodies like the sun, the moon, stars, galaxies etc., and their movement and positions in space, is called "Jyotish Vidya" or the science of "Astrology"[1]

Jyotish Vidya also deals with astrometereology i.e. the study of the influence, or supposed influence, of the stars, planets etc. on climate and weather. In the universe all heavenly bodies [except God] rotate on their axis and around their so-called 'Sun'. All heavenly bodies (sun, moon etc.) move or rotate because of influence of God.

There are many subjects in the Jyotish Vidya, which are as follows—

Which type of movement does God create in the Prakriti at the time of creation of the universe? From that Big Bang how Mahatattva (the principle of Wisdom), Ahankara (the principle of individuality), Indriyas (the principle of senses), Tanmatras (the principle of subtle entities), Gross entities i.e. Great elements are created? How the sun, earth, moon, planets, galaxies, and other things were created? What is the Universe, sun, earth and their interaction? What causes them to rotate and who rotates them? Why do they rotate in the skies? What is the shape of

1. The study of the positions and aspects of the heavenly bodies is based on the belief that they have an influence on the course of human affairs.

earth? How and why is it round? What is its diameter? What is the measurement of its circumnference? How does it rotate? What is its velocity? How do things remain in contact while these heavenly bodies are in motion? What is the cause of variation in earth's motion? What are the results of its movements? What is gravity and where does it lie? What are its effects and results? What is light? What is day and night? How are they created? Why and how does a day increase? How much does it increase? Why and how does a night increase? From where does the day start? Why, when and where does the day/night remain day/night for six months at a stretch? How do the residents of that place behave? Why does the shadow of the sun, sometimes seems to be small and why at times is it big? Why does it sometimes move towards the north and the south? What are the various seasons? What is the cause of seasons and where do they occur? How many are they? When and why do their reoccurrence happens? Do all seasons exist on the entire earth? Why does one season not occur everywhere at the same time? Where and how do humans live on earth? What is the meaning when we say above and below? What is a Sea? Where is it? What is moon and how is it? How and why does it rotate? Why does it increase gradually and when full then decrease gradually and one day it is completely invisible, why? How does a fortnight occur? What are its parameters? Let's go and see how the earth is seen from there (moon)? Why is the earth illuminated? What are the effects on earth when moon rotates? What is its axis and diameter? What does the 'spot on moon' actually mean? Is there any moon to the moon or not? How do days and nights exist on moon? Are they bigger or shorter than of ours? Why is it so? What is a month? What is the parameter of a month on the moon? Do seasons also exist on the moon or no? If yes then how many? Where does the moon stand? Where is the earth situated? Is there only one earth or many more similar to our earth? What are their shapes, existence and movement? Are they motionless or is there any

movement? Do days and nights exist there too? If yes, then what are the parameters? Are they same as ours day and nights or bigger/ shorter? Why? What are the parameters of months and years? Do moons exist on their earth? How many moons are there one or many? If there is one moon then what is the position of Shukla Paksha i.e. lighted part? What is the definition of sun? What is its diameter and axis? Where and how is the sun situated? Do days, months and years exist on the sun or no and why? Why is there a sign on the sun? How does it rotate? Is there just one sun or many more like it? What is an eclipse? How many kinds are there? Why do they exist? What are the effects of an eclipse? Does the earth expand or shrink? What are planets and how many are they? Are there any effects of these planets on humans? If yes, then of what kind? Is the sun, what we see, smallest or the biggest and what is its parameter? What is the relation of the sun with another one? What are stars? How many of them are there? Are they standstill or do they rotate? Where are they during the day? Why are they not visible in the daytime? Why are they seen only at night? What are tail stars? How many are there? Where do they live? Why are they seen only sometimes? What kind of gains/losses do we get from them? What are the Ulkayas? Why are they seen? What is a Muhurat? What are Day, Month, Season, Uttar-Dakshinayan, Year, century, Millenium, Era, Manvantar, Kalp and Mahaakalp? What is Pralaya i.e. the deluge and Maha-Pralaya i.e. great deluge? How many types of days, months, years, etc. are there? How are they useful to us?

What is the Aakash Ganga or galaxies? How many are they? What are horoscopes? How many are of them there? What are their shapes and how many kinds of them exist? What kind of effect do humans get from them? Is there any end of the stars or not? How do they come into existence? Why are they created? Do they exist as they are or vanish at some point of time? Why do they vanish? What is called a Deluge? What is the use of the deluge? What does it remain in a deluge? How many times has the creation and

dissolution taken place till now? Does dissolution take place for all Lokas i.e. planets at one time or does it take place in different periods of time for different planets etc.

What is light? What is Jyoti (llumination)? What is the appearance (emblem) of light? What is its speed? How much is this? Is there a limit to it or no? How many kinds of Jyoti's are there? What are the shapes and types of this Jyotish-Pindas i.e. Illuminated bodies? What is electricity? What is Akasha i.e. the ether? Is there any size of the ether? Where all these types of things/thoughts which are described and called the Jyotish Shastra.

[Courtesy: "Jyotish Vivek" by Aacharya Vedavrat Meemansak]

Vedangas:

There are six Vedangas in number:—(i) Shiksha (Phonetics science of morals and duties); (ii) Kalpa (Geometry); (iii) Vyakarana (Grammar); (iv) Chhanda (Metrics i.e. Philology); (v) Nirukta (Etymology) and (vi) Jyotisha (Astronomy and Astrology).

It is said in the Panini education that Chhandas are like legs of the Vedas, Kalpa like hands, Jyotish like eyes, Nirukta like ears, Shiksha like nose and Vyakarana is like the mouth of the Vedas.

One cannot see anything without the eyes, in the same way without the knowledge of Jyotish one cannot understand the meanings of the Vedic verses.

Nakshatras or Galaxies:

There are 28 Nakshatras (Galaxies) and their Devtas (deities) in our solar system. Names of their deities are given in brackets. They are described as follows: -

(Krittika (Agni); Rohini (Prajapati); Mrigashira (Soma); Aarda (Rudra); Punarvasu (Aditi); Pushya (Brihaspati); Aashlesha or Ashlesha (Sarpa); Magha (Pitara); Purva-phalguni (Aryama); Uttara-phalguni (Bhaga); Hasta (Savita); Chitra (Indra); Swati (Vayu); Vishakha (Indrani); Anuradha (Mitra); Jyeshtha (Indra); Mula (Pitara);

Purvaashadha (Aapaha); Uttaraashadha (Vishwadeva); Abhijeet (Brahma); Shravana (Vishnu); Shravishtha (Vasavaha); Shatabhishaj (Indra); Purva-Bhadrapada (Aaja Ekapaad); Uttara-Bhadrapada (Ahirbudhnya); Revati (Pooshaa) - Purva-Ashvani and Uttaraa-Ashvani (Ashwinou) and Bharani (Yama)]

(Atharvaveda 19-7- Mantras # 2, 3, 4 and 5; the Atharvaveda 19-8- Mantras # 1 and 2)

"Nakshatrebhihi Pitaro Dyaamapishan" (Rigveda 10-68-11) which mean the Divine power has beautified the sky with the Nakshatras.

"Hariranyaasyam Bhavati Swadhaavaan Shukro Anyasyaam" (Rigveda 1-95-1) means "The sun gives light in the daytime and Nakshatras illuminate at night".

According to the Surya Siddhanta (the theory of the sun) there are twenty-eight galaxies from Ashvani to Revati.

द्वादश प्रधयश्चक्रमेकं त्रीणि नभ्यानि क उ तच्चिकेत।
तस्मिन्त्साकं त्रिशता न शङ्कवोऽर्पिताःषष्टिर्न चलाचलासः ॥

"Dwaadash Pradhayashchakramekam Treeni Naabhyaani Ka U Tachchiketa, Tasmintsaakam Trishataa Na Shadkavorpitahaa Pashtirna Chalaacha-laasah" (Rigveda 1-164-48)

This means that there are 360 parts in 12 divisions of the wheel of a Samvatsar (solar year), in which there are three Nabhis i.e. cold, heat and rain. The Mantra says that 360 portions of this wheel are immovable.

तस्त्राहतास्त्रीनि शतानि श्नकवः।
शष्तिश्च खीला अविचाचला ये॥

"Tastraahataastreeni Shatani Shnkavah Shashtishcha Kheelaa Avichaachalaa Ye" (Atharvaveda 10-8-4),

This mantra says that this wheel of time has its existence, which is wheel of Horoscopes.

{Refer Atharvaveda 10-8-4, Rigveda 1-164-11 and 1-164-46 for the detailed verses quoted for twelve divisions

or signs and twelve months of year.]

The twelve signs at present named, are as follows —

Aries i.e. Mesha (Mrach 20 to April 18),

Taurus i.e. Vrisha (April 19 to May 19),

Gemini i.e. Mithuna (May 20 to June 20),

Cancer i.e. Karka (June 21 to July 21), Leo i.e. Sinha (July 22 to August 21),

Virgo i.e. Kanya (August 22 to September 20),

Libra i.e. Tula (September 21 to October 22), Scorpio i.e. Vrischika (October 23 to November 21),

Sagittarius i.e. Dhanuh (November 22 to December 22),

Capricorn i.e. Makra (December 23 to January 19),

Aquarius i.e. Kumbha (January 20 to February 18) and Pisces i.e. Meen (February 19 to March 19).]

Names of 12 months:

It was already described in our ancient Granthas that there are twelve months in a year. Names are given as follows: -

Madhu (Chaitra), Madhava (Vaishakh),

Shukra (Jyeshth), Shuchi (Aashaadh), Nabhas (Shravan),

Nabhasya (Bhadrapad), Drisha (Aashwin), Urja (Kaartik),

Sahasa (Margashirsh), Sahasya (Poosh), Tapasa (Maagh) and Tapasya (Phaalgun); (Taitriya Samhita: 6.5.3, Yajurveda: 13/25, 14/6, 15/57); Taitreya Samhita: 4/4/11/1, Kathak Samhita: 17/10/25-28) and (Maitrayani Samhita: 2/8/12/24-26)]

There is a description of extra month *'Sansarpa'* in the Veda.

वेद मासो धृतव्रतो द्वादश प्रजावतः ।

वेदा य उपजायते ॥

"Veda Maaso Dhritavrato Dwadash Prajavatah.

Vedaa Ya Upajayate". (Rigveda: 1.25.2)

These twelve months are divided into six seasons: -

1. Madhu-Madhava i.e. Vasanta (Spring), 2. Shuchi-Shukra i.e. Grishma (Summer), 3. Nabhas-Nabhasya i.e. Varsha (Monsoon), 4. Isha-Urja i.e. Sharad (Winter), 5. Sahas-Sahasya i.e. Hemanta and 6. Tapas-Tapasya i.e. Shishir (Autumn).

[(Vahi: 4.4.17) (Rigveda: 1.164.11,12,13)]

Uses of Jyotish Vidya:

Jyotish Shastra is treated as eyes of the Vedas. The pundit of the Jyotish acquires righteousness, wealth, necessities of life and fame. No one can understand the Vedas properly without the knowledge of Jyotish Vidya i.e. Astrology. He who knows the science of astrology cannot be entangled in the clutches of blind-faith, in other words one visualises the correct picture of faith and truth.

Important information

We are told that the average distance between the earth and the sun is 93 million miles. Light, the lightest known messenger, travels at a speed of 186,000 miles a second. So in a year it covers a distance of about 6 million miles. If it could travel from one side of the galaxy to the other, the journey would take it about 100 thousand years. There are over 100,000 million stars in our galaxy and then there are about 100 million galaxies in the universe. This means that there are some ten trillion stars in all. On a clear dark night, you can see, with your eyes alone, as far as, 9,000,000,000,000,000,000 (nine billion billion) miles all the way to the Andromeda galaxy. Is it not a wonder that the One who is responsible for the existence of this vast universe has given to each of us a tiny little organ called 'eye' to see beyond such long distances? Coldest temperature of the sun in the darkest sunspots is estimated to be 4000 degree centigrade, the temperature in the flare of the sun is 20,000 degree centigrade, and, that of the corona, or the outer atmosphere,

that extends for millions of miles beyond the Sun is 1,000,000 degree centigrade. It is very difficult for any of us to have an idea of the temperature in the core of the Sun.

The Science of Creation

The earth is round, its circumference is said to be 24902 miles, and its diameter is 7926 miles. According to astrologers the estimated weight of the earth is 6,60,00,00,00,00,00,00,00,00,000 tons. It rotates with the speed of 185 miles per second around the Sun, which is 63,000,000 miles away. It takes one year to complete the round path, which is 583725765 miles. Moon is its satellite, which is 296000 miles away from the earth. Its diameter is 2160 miles. It rotates on its axis and around the earth. The earth and the moon, both are the members of our solar system. Distance of the sun is 93000000 miles from here. Its diameter is 864000 miles. The scientists say that the weight of the sun is 200,00,00,00,00,00,00,00,00,00,00,00,000 tons, in which 1300000 planets of the size of our earth can immerse. The farthest satellite is Pluto, which is 3670000000 miles away from the earth. The nearest satellite is Mercury (Budh) whose diameter is 2900 miles. The nearest distance of these satellites from the sun is 29000000 miles and the farthest is 43000000 miles. In the same way the satellite named Venus (Shukra) is situated at the distance of 67275000 miles from our earth. It is the most illuminated star for some months in the south after sunset and before sunrise in the east. Venus light comes second to the moonlight. After this our earth comes in line. Hereafter comes the planet called Mars (Mangal) which is 141690000 miles away from the sun and its diameter is 4221 miles. It has two moons as our earth has one. After this there are more than 1600 planet-pieces whose diameters are mostly not less than 10 to 20 miles. Some of them are hundreds of miles too. Some pieces are not more than two hundred miles in diameters. It is said that there are billions of pieces like rocky stones, which are 250 miles away from the sun. They all rotate around the sun. Next comes the planet Jupiter (Guru)

whose shape is 1300 times more than our earth and distance from the sun is 483300000 miles. It is an important planet in the solar system and said to be younger brother of the sun. It has twelve[1] satellites. Now it is Saturn's (Shani) turn, which has ten moons and is 763 times bigger than the earth and rotates at a distance of 886300000 miles around the sun. It has three beautiful coverings which makes it the most attractive, incomparable and worth seeing planet of the Mother Nature. After this what is seen is the planet known as Uranus which is slightly smaller than the Saturn in size. It has five moons and its distance from the sun is 1784080000 miles. Next comes Neptune which is 2796700000 miles away from the sun and has two moons. Far away there is one planet called Pluto and its distance from the sun is 3670000000 miles.

There are more than 1,00,00,00,00,000 Dhoomketu (look like Smoky-tail planets) at the distance of 13000000000000 miles from the sun. They all rotate around the sun. Some of them are with their 200000000 miles long smoky-tail.

Human mind cannot think of the numbers of these heavenly bodies, as they are innumerous. The main purpose of Jyotish Vidya is to show that God is the greatest of all. He is almighty, Omniscient, Omnipresent and Omnipotent. He is the Creator, Sustainer and Destructor of the universe. Without the knowledge of Jyotish no one can get the true knowledge of anything. The knowledge of the Jyotish Vidya is a must before studying the Holy Vedas.

Jyotish Shastra or Astrology—The laws of nature being eternal, there can never be any changes in the movements of these illuminated heavenly bodies, that is why the astrologer can predict solar and lunar eclipse well before (even centuries before) their movements take place. Indian

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1. There are thirteen moons of the Jupiter according to daily paper in Telugu 'Andhraprabha' Dt. 3rd. December 1947).

astrologers (Jyotishis) have their knowledge since the creation of the universe as this science of astrology exists in the Holy Vedas. They know the exact timing and duration of these 'Lunar or Solar eclipse', and they can also caution public of their (eclipse) effect on living being or in the atmosphere at that period of time. Hence humans can be well prepared to face any calamity during eclipse.

The actions never rest without giving their fruits to the doer. Hence movements of these heavenly bodies can never change. And no astrologer can change or lessen the power of consequences of fruits of one's actions. One has to face the results of his actions, bad or good that depends upon his quality and quantity of his actions. Wear whatever precious stones, gems, diamonds or any thing on your finger-rings or in chains, perform any type of rituals, go to any temple of your choice in any part of the world, but no one can get rid of his fruits of his deeds done with thoughts, talks and actions.

One can be aware of the pains not-yet-come and they can be avoided. "Heyam Dukhamanaagatam" (Yogadarshana:II,16) i.e. pain that is not-yet-come is avoidable. By the use of the words 'not yet come' that past and the present have been taken out of the preview. One can change his attitude of life by feeling the Omnipresence of God

ईश्वरप्रणिधानाद्वा:

"Ishwarapranidhand vaa" (Yogadarshana : I, 23)

by doing God deeds in life, by meditation of God by practice of Yoga.

If the geologic study of celestial bodies is called "Astrology" then how can an astrologer predict the future of other person? No one can predict for the future of any human being.

Man is a free agent[1] so it is not possible for any one to

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1. Interested readers can refer the book "Quest—The Vedic Answers" in which the author has written the attributions etc., of free agent in detail.

predict or decide for his future. Decisions can be taken but no one knows what will happen tomorrow. Laws of nature are eternal but man is a free agent by nature. According to his knowledge, will and capability a man can do whatever he wants. What will he do (if he has not decided yet) no one can know.

The soul is an infinitesimal entity hence possesses limited knowledge. One possesses the tendencies to forget the past and does not know of the present because of tension for the future, then how can an astrologer, who is also human being, predict anyone's future? Man is of fickle (inconstant) tendency, he does not even know his own future, how can he definitely say something about anyone's future? No one can know the future of any free agent i.e. human being.

"The part of astrology which comprises Arithmetic, Algebra, Geometry etc., and which goes by the name of Astronomy is true; but the other part that treats of the influence of stars on human being and their actions and goes by the name of Astrology is all false." [*Light Of truth:* Chapter # 2]

There are always changes in things made of 'Prakriti', because God's powers of 'creation and destruction' always exist in the universe. There is creation in some place and destruction in some other place. There is birth somewhere and there is death elsewhere. There is always change in the universe; this is an eternal law of nature.

The bodies of all animate beings are made of five gross elements. Newborn baby grows, becomes a teenager, young and old. There is a change in our body, every moment without our knowledge. Every part, every organ of our body changes, every moment, but we do not know the changes at that time. After some months or years, we of course see changes in our body. The skin is the uppermost part of our body. There are seven layers of these skin which grows automatically/naturally when it burns or when it is damaged due to some accident or wound.

You all must have noticed that the lines on the palms of our hands keep changing. The reason for this is that when old skin dies (element dies), new skin comes out in that place. The lines are the result of bending, closing etc. of our palms. At birth a child is born with closed palms, so some main lines already exist there on the palms of the newborn babies. These are natural lines made for the comfort of closing and bending our palms. There is no connection of these lines on the future or destiny of ones life.[1]

It would not be a satisfactory result, if some astrologer, mathematician, saint, or a holy person tells your future. Now-a-days it is a fashion to show your hands or see one's horoscope in newspapers to know your future. Really speaking all this is nothing but a waste of time. Whatever is going to happen tomorrow, no one can prevent the laws of nature. Palm-lines cannot be 100% accurate to inform or predict anyone's future; on the contrary it is headache for those who have blind faith in these useless things.

"It is futile to try to predict the future and give an account of the past. We know that it is the weakness of human nature to know both the past and the future. There are statistical methods of calculating the probabilities of mass events on the basis of certain reliable data (just as of the toss of a coin, whether head or tail, 1:1, i.e., 50% chances of both). But no mathematics would enable you to predict a particular event in the above instance of the toss of a coin. An individual event can never be predicted with exactness." [Courtesy: Man and his religion]

The science of astrology is 100% right but to tell about

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1. Indian astrologers have studied these lines since long time and concluded some results after seeing several people's palm-lines. It can be possible that some lines show the same behaviours of some people, but it is not 100% correct to say that these lines can predict the future of any person. There are 60%—40% possibilities or you can say probabilities that lines can tell correct attributes, nature and characters of some of the persons.

the fruits of one's future are absurd and hazardous. This is symbol of ignorance of people who do not want to work. God's theory of cause and action is eternal i.e. *"An effect presupposes cause"*(*Vaisheshika Darshana:* 4.1.3.) and *"Where there is no cause, there can be no effect"*(*Vaisheshika Darshana:* 1.2.2.).

Man is always inquisitive to know his future or destiny in his life. By showing his palms to some palmists-cum-astrologers (whose business is to satisfy his clients and take money according to their positions), they get some relief to know that their future is very good. These people are actually atheists or nihilists who have no faith in God's justice. To make tomorrow better one has to make his present good by doing virtuous actions, because tomorrow rests upon today. Actions done in past give their fruits in the present or in the future and actions done in the present will give results in the form of illuminated or dark future. If our present is good, do not worry about tomorrow. Rest leave to God.

Believe in God. Trust in God. Worship His Omnipresent, Omniscient, Omnipotent and formless form. Act according to the teachings of the Vedas to get the best results of your actions. One, who adores God as his father, mother and everything experiences bliss. When a child is in the lap of his father or mother, he feels secure and free of all pains and miseries and realises true bliss.

It is correct that any type of ornamental jewellery uplifts the beauty of the wearer. It brightens up the face. Gold and silver effect the body.

Kings of ancient times wore ornaments and jewellery made of diamonds, pearls etc; they used to drink in silvery glass and eat in golden plates. Pearl and silver has a cold effect on the body, they give coolness to the body. Gold supplies energy to the body. All metals have their own diferent properties that are good for health. If there is any deficiency of any particular metal, it can be rectified by

taking the drugs made from metals' ashes.[1] Doctors know better the condition of patient and what should be given to them accordingly. Iron is found in our blood, hence doctors always describe iron tablets for those anemic patients who are suffering from the deficiency of iron in their body.

There is no benefit in wearing precious stones according to ones horoscopic signs. There is no reality in the notion that wearing precious stones improves ones financial capacity etc. And there is no effect on the destiny or on our future from these ornaments studded with pearl, diamonds, gems etc. One has to face the consequences of his/her actions. There is no excuse in any condition. Man alone is thus responsible for his good and bad actions. Our life is a complex function of so many parameters that the future remains unpredictive or can be changed by wearing stones. Our actions are the seeds of the fruits that we get by way of pleasure and pain. This law is eternal and no one can change or alter it by any means. Whatever fruits are hidden in one's destiny (according to his past actions), must come and have to be experienced by the doer alone.

If by just wearing those precious stones, the fate or destiny of a person changes then God's laws of action and reaction (Karma-phal) will have no meanings at all! Is it possible that 'Karma-Phal' theory made by the Supreme Soul is wrong? Is it possible that our actions go waste without giving the fruits to the doer? Then why to do good deeds? Then why to think about the future? Readers must decide!

"Maharshi Dayananda Saraswati" has explained in his evergreen book "Light Of Truth" (Chapter 2).

"No, that part of it which comprises Arithmetic, Algebra, Geometry etc., and which goes by the name of Astronomy is true; but the other part that treats the influence

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1. The ashes (Bhasma) of gold, silver, pearl etc. are used in Ayurveda medicines because metals have their own effects on the body.

of stars on human being and their actions and goes by the name of Astrology is all false.

"Horoscope: It should be named not 'horoscope', but deathknell of happiness; because the birth of a child gladdens every heart in the family, but this happiness lasts only so long as the horoscope is not cast, and the aspect of the planets is not read out to the parents."

"These are nothing but downright frauds and quackery. Should any one say: "If I were to give a charmed bangle or locket to any person, my God or saint would ward off all evils from him through the power of the charm or incantations". To such a person the following Quests should be put: "Can you by your charms evade death, or the laws of God, or the consequences of your deeds? Many a child die inspite of your charms and incantations; and, even your own children die. why can't you save them? Will you be able to save yourself from death? These quests, that fraternity can never answer, and they soon find that the game is not worth the candle."

Therefore, it behoves all to do away with all kinds of false and superstitious practices and do all in their power to promote, in return for their services, the welfare of those pious, learned men, who are devoted to their country and are altruistic teachers of humanity, teaching and preaching to all without the least amount of hypocrisy.

All alchemists, magicians, sorcerers, wizards, spiritists, etc., are cheats and all their practices should be looked upon as nothing but downright fraud. Young people should be well counselled against all these frauds, in their very childhood, so that they may not suffer through being duped by any unprincipled person.

Birth, Death and Rebirth

According to the laws of nature, separation of the soul from the body is called "Death", whilst its union with the body is called "Birth" of the body. In other words when the soul acquires a body, it is called birth and when it leaves the body, it is called death. Birth after death is called "Re-birth". Anything which is created and again dissolved in its original cause is called the 'birth and death' of that thing.

Life is the period (time) between birth and death. When a soul acquires a body (gets a body with the grace of God), it is called "birth" and when the soul and its acquired body are separated, it is called "death". The soul is an eternal entity that cannot be created or is destroyed, hence it has no birth or death. Birth and death is only for the insensate things that are created and destroyed. In this universe everything is changeable except the trinity i.e. God, soul and the matter (Prakriti).

Birth:

When a soul leaves its acquired insensate materialistic body, it lives in atmosphere under the guidance of Yama[16]. Being the Greatest Judge—God embodies the soul according to the nature of its karmas done in previous lives. Under God's guidance, a soul enters the body of one (chosen or selected by Yama) living being through air, water, food, and drink or through any one of the openings of the body.

Balance of the Creation exists because of birth and death. If there is only birth and no death, then the system of nature will be disturbed, hence birth and death are essential and this natural law is beginningless and endless.

The physical body, which is made of five gross elements, is actually dead and inert matter, but it looks live because of the existence of the soul within it. The moment the soul leaves the body, the body becomes dead inert matter. The soul is unborn and infinite, because it is eternal.

Death:

The 'death' is the greatest unsolved mystery of the world which man tries to unravel. The discovery is on to solve the mystery of death. Even science is unable to understand or conquer death, because death is not a materialistic thing. The soul is eternal, hence death comes only to the material/physical body.

The relationship between birth and death is a vicious circle. When there is birth, death is bound to follow and when death occurs, birth follows. (The wheel of birth and death has been rotating from time-infinite and will keep on rotating forever without any interruption; because there exists the Divine Power of Creation and Destruction.)

Science teaches us that nothing can be created or destroyed, it only changes its form. When the body dies and is cremated it seems like it has vanished in the fire but on the contrary the body is dissolved in its subtle elements i.e. its cause. (The body made of five gross elements, dissolves in its five subtle elements respectively.) It should be understood that where there is change, it must contain the attributes of the Matter i.e. Prakriti.

There are three eternal entities — God, the Matter and numerous number of Souls. God and the Souls are conscious entities whereas the Prakriti is a dead inert matter. By the influence of God, there is a continuous change in the Prakriti' 's effort i.e. the Srishti or the Creation.

यस्यच्छायाऽमृतं यस्यमृत्युः

"Yasyachchhayamritam Yasya Mrityuh"

(Yajurveda: 25-13)

means Birth and death is under God's control. He who obeys

God's commandments lives in the shadow of God i.e. he enjoys His bliss and eternity. On the other hand he, who does not obey His commandments or orders and advices, fails to obtain His grace and gets entangled in the vicious circle of birth and death.

It is one of the eternal laws that "what is given away is what remains". God is an endless sea of bliss hence he/she who is in communion with God acquires His Blissful Company (Pure happiness and Lustre) which keeps him/her away from all worldly pain and gains. God is just and merciful, so whatever He does, is for the betterment and upliftment of the soul. One should not fear from death. Life is a continuously rotating wheel of birth and death. Every soul that is embodied has to pass through the gates of birth and death sooner or later, until it escapes from the worldly ties and then only he/she acquires Moksha i.e. Emancipation or Salvation, which lasts for *Paraant-kaal* i.e. 31,10,40,00,00,00,000 years. The emancipated soul lives in the Bliss of God, enjoys freedom of movement anywhere in the universe, all his desires are fulfilled for the period of 36000 times of creation and destruction.

Humans are said to be the best species because only humans enjoy the freedom of Karma and can improve their lives according to their "Dharma". It is human species where the soul can acquire the ultimate goal of his life. In other species (except humans) souls are bound by their in-built nature where they have no freedom of Karma and they have no choice but to experience their fruits (punishments) according to their own past lives' karmas. Hence these species are called the *"Bhoga Yoni*[17]*"*. On the other side humans are said to be in *"Karma Yoni"* and with the help of their intelligence they can attain Bliss of almighty God with the help of *"Yoga*[18]*"*. It is also called the "Yog Yoni".

Human life is a very precious one because one is free to act according to his/her will; the increment or decrement of the Jiva depends upon his/her actions. If nothing good is

done in this life (Human life), it goes waste. One has to learn the art of living with a positive attitude. Each and every moment of life should be enjoyed with happiness and love, and one should be grateful to God for the precious human life, which He has given us.

A meaningful life is one when man leaves the world with his good deeds, he should be remembered and appreciated by others for his work. No one knows the time span of anyone's life. One should be hopeful and must learn the art of living, so that each and every moment should be lived with happiness and we must thank God for all that He has provided for our betterment. A useful life is that which remains as a fond memory in the hearts of many people for years to come, otherwise people come and go, some are worshiped like God and others are simply forgotten. Those who are worshiped have really lived their lives to the fullest.

There are many similarities between death and sleep. While sleeping, one gets relief from bodily tiredness of the entire day, and wakes up fresh and energetic. In the same way, death removes tiredness of the entire life, and the soul receives a new body. In the new body, the Jiva performs all new actions with renewed vigor and freshness. The Jiva gets a new chance to communion with the Supreme Soul by Meditation, which is available only to the human race.

The importance and necessity of death is more than that of sleep. Living beings may sleep as much as they want in their entire life, but it is death in which all have to take shelter in the end. Sleep is limited to a few hours but death is a form of permanent sleep, from which no one can ever wake up.

Sleep is a shadow of death in which the body is relaxed for a few hours, but death relaxes the body permanently. Death puts an end to all kinds of diseases, pain and misery.

Now-a-days, many people suffering from insomania (sleeplessness or lack of sleep) take sleeping pills or other medicines to get a good sleep, but still they are unfortunate

and do not enjoy sound sleep. On the other hand it is the death which gives sound and permanent sleep to all living beings once they come in its grasp. Sleep can escape, but death never forgets to embrace and give shelter to every one.

One, who has taken birth, will have to enter the jaws of death. Life is a journey between birth and death and to get rid of this one has to take the shelter of God.

Fear of death exists due to our own ignoance, because we have not understood the meaning of death properly. The fear will go away if we get correct inforation on this subject. The fear of death is increased because of love for self and fear of losing those who are near and dear to us. Death is essential, unavoidable and certain, so why to worry or get afraid of these things. Death becomes easy for those who have the right spiritual knowledge, that after death they will take birth once again according to their deeds, good or bad, in the present life. If their deeds are really good then there is no need to worry, and if their deeds are really bad, this is the right time for self-examination and improving our attitudes for the remaining part of life.

Mostly common man fears death when he sees it. On the other hand learned men, who are spiritually enlightened and have gained the knowledge of the Vedas want to conquer it by renouncing worldly pleasures and communion with God so that they are free from the vicious circle of birth and death and enjoy Emancipation without this physical body.

In Mahabharat there is a story which states —Lord of the death Yamaraja asks king Yudhishthir: "What is the most wonderful thing in the world?". King Yudhishthir answered: "The most wonderful thing is that, day after day countless people die all around us, but those who live believe that death will not yet happen to them, and they carry on as if it doesn't matter. What could be more wonderful than this."

Shrimad Bhagwatam points out that even we are busily engaged in our family, business or recreational affairs and

may forget about the problem of death, death doesn't forget about us. "Insurmountable, eternal time imperceptibly overcomes those who are too much attached to family affairs and are always engrossed in their thought." (*Bhagwatam:* 1.13.17)

"Despite your unwillingness to die and your desire to live even at the cost of honour and prestige, your miserly body will certainly dwindle and deteriorate like an old garment." (Shrimad Bhagwatam: 1.13.25)

The Rigveda explains through Question and Answer in this holy mantra—

अमी ये देवाः स्थन ट्रिष्वा रोचने दिवः ।

कद्व ऋतं कदनृतं क्व प्रत्ना व आहुतिर्वित्तं मे अस्य रोदसी ॥

"Amee Ye Devaha Sthana Trishvaarochane Divah,
Kridha Rritei Kadanrita Kwa Pratvaa Va aahutirvitam
Me Asya Rodasee" (Rigveda 1-105-5)

Q. When all the worlds in this Universe vanish i.e. in the state of dissolution, where do they all stay? Where do all souls stay?

A. One should know that the Universe dissolves in its cause and stays in space, the souls also live in God in the state of deep sleep. God sustains all worlds in the Universe under the gravitational force of their respective Suns.

Pt. Ramchand Dehlvi, the greatest wrangler, has given clarification of this quest in these lines —"long duration of the dissolution (i.e. 432 million years) is not the same for all souls. Because one cannot have the knowledge of time in deep sleep, so as all souls do in the long period of dissolution of the creation. Emancipated souls live in God with His knowledge and Bliss, whilst others enjoy the deep sleep without any knowledge in that period of dissolution.

As the world is created and dissolved there is a continuous chain of creation and dissolution. The Universe is in the state of dissolution for 432 million years [Rigvedadi-Bhashya-Bhoomika, (Sub: Creation of the

Universe)]. God always lives in the present.

Causes of Death:

The Ayurveda says that there are more than one hundred reasons for death and one of them is accident. But according to Yajurveda: 25.13 the main cause of death is non-obedience of God's commandments. There are other causes too such as accidents, sickness, unsystematic pattern of eating and drinking, polluted environment, interrupted life style and our own attitudes against the laws of nature. Old age death is natural one, because the materialistic body becomes old and useless, so the soul has to leave the body. which results in natural death. Suicide and knowingly ending one's life is an abnormal cause of death. There are three kinds of pains or Dukhas such as Aadhyatmik, Aadibhoutik and Aadidaivik.

(1) *Aadhyatmik:* This type of pain is caused by physical disorders, hunger and thirst, etc.

(2) Aadibhoutik is received from other living beings such as snake bite, dog bite etc. and

(3) Aadidaivik is such that is caused by Natural calamities such as excessive heat or cold, or excessive or deficient rain, or from the restlessness of mind and the senses—

In the modern life style most common causes of death are tension, hypertension, heart attack, cancer and undetected alien diseases etc.

The soul lives in a healthy physical body, made of five gross elements e.g. earth, water, fire, air and ether. When the balance of these five elements is disturbed, the body becomes ill. Increment or decrement of any of these five elements effects the stability of health, and the soul is eveready to leave the unbalanced or disturbed body, until it gets well. In an accident or suicide etc. water element in the body is reduced, hence death occurs. In illness /sickness one should take care and get himself treated otherwise the

consequences will be nothing but death.

यस्यच्छायाऽमृतं यस्यमृत्युः

"Yasyachchhaayaamritam Yasya Mrityuh"

(Yajurveda: 25.13)

The Veda says —God showers His bliss (longer and healthy life) to one who is obedient to His commandments, and in the reversed conditions i.e. he who does not obey Him, experiences extreme pain which results in death.

The great sage Manu has described more causes of death like—

अनभ्याँसेन वेदनमचर्यास्य च वर्जनात्।

आलस्यादन्नदोषाश्च मृत्युर्विपाज्जिधांसति ॥

"Anabhyasen Vedanamacharasya Cha Varjanat Aalasyadannadoshashcha Mrityurvipranjadyasati"

(Manu-Smriti: 5/4)

means By not studying the Vedas, acquiring bad habits and leaving good attitudes, becoming idle or wasting time and eating wrong foods, death will kill the noble man. The noble man cannot be killed by anyone but if there remains the abovesaid impurities then no one can rescue him from death.

Control over sexual habits is life and discharging energy is death. Meeting virtuous people is life and relationship with bad ones is death. Knowledge is life and ignorance is death. Communion with God is life and communion with Prakriti is death.

It should be kept in mind that death comes to the body while the soul is imperishable, everlasting, undecaying and an eternal entity.

Abode of the soul after death:

The Soul is an eternal entity hence cannot die and can be born or created. The body is made of five great elements of the nature called earth, water, fire, air and ether. The thing, which is created or born, has to perish or die. This is an eternal law of the nature.

According to the Brihadaranyak (4-5) the Soul cannot be broken or burnt like the materialistic things, but it resides in the subtle body at the time of death.

And when nervauric or vital forces (Praanaas) leave the body, at the time of death, it becomes cold. (*Vedanta* 4-2-11).

While leaving the physical body, the soul resides in the atmosphere (Yama), because it is said in the Vedas " Yama is another name for air." Thereafter the Great Judge —God — embodies that soul according to the nature of its deeds done in the previous life. Guided by God it enters the body of some living creature with air, water, food, and drink or through any opening in the body. Under the control of God's system it receives a new body. When? where? how that depends upon the soul's past impressions of infinite lives deeds, which God decides and makes arrangements for its future (जाति-आयु-भोग) "Life-State, Life-Time and Life-Experience", because only God is just and the holiest (*Yajurveda* 23-3), who creates the bodies of all living beings.

The soul is continuously chained down to this wheel of birth and death till by the practice of the highest virtue and complete absorption into Divine contemplation and the acquisition of the highest knowledge, it obtains Emancipation. By the practice of deeds of the highest virtue, etc. It is born as a good and great personage among men; and being freed from birth and death and the consequent pain and suffering, it enjoys perfect bliss in Emancipation till the end of the Grand-Dissolution.

ब्रह्मचर्येन तपसा देवा मृत्युमुपाघनात

"Brahmchryena Tapasa Deva Mrityumupaghnata"

which means : One who is a true yogi, a true spiritual teacher, a disciplined noble person and one who always thinks of God, only enjoys His bliss and conquers death. In other words those who follow the instructions of their spiritual masters can reach the state of death daily while living in this world, for this, one should live a renounced life.

वेदाहमेतं पुरुषं महान्तमादित्यवर्णं तमसः परस्तात्।
तमेव विदित्वाति मृत्युमेति नान्य पन्था विद्यतेऽयनाय॥

"Vedahametam Purusham Ahantamadityavarnam Tapasah Parastat, Tameva Viditvati Mrityumeti Nanyah Pantha Vidyateyanaya." (Yajurveda 31/18)

Frequently Asked Question:

How can death be granted death?

That is the answer to this question, for which the soul receives many bodies. Death is the greatest unsolved mystery on earth. Even the scientists are trying hard to conquer death and solve this problem forever.

Yes! It is death from which all creatures run helter-skelter to try and get rid of, for they do not want to face it and try to find some way to leave it behind them. All fear from death by just looking at it, be it a genius or a fool —a child or an old person —poor or rich —a beggar or a king —a demon or a virtuous man —everyone finds his/her own way to conquer death. Everyone wants to be eternal and that is the purpose of human life.

"If man wants to enjoy the pleasure of all worlds, he should know the Supreme Soul, who is self-illuminated, All-blissful, away from any kinds of impurities and always lives in the present, then he shall be separated from the sea of pain. This is the only way to be free from the bondage of birth and death and there is no other way for Emancipation."

There is no other way to conquer death other than to know God.

Re-birth

There are many mantras in the Veda that explain and support the theory of Re-birth—Atharvaveda: 11.4.6; Yajurveda: 4.15; Rigveda: 10.59.6; 1.24.1; 1.24.2.

After death (i.e. after leaving the present dead body), when the soul receives another body according to his resident tendencies (संस्कार Sanskaras), it is called rebirth. Whosoever is born must die. This is a common experience. But this does not mean the death of the soul, that is, of the self. The soul escapes from the body, and this is known as death. When the soul enters the fertilized ovum, it is birth. Death is the door between two lives, the present one and the next one. Birth is also a door between the previous life and the present one. Birth after death is called "Re-birth". Death is as great a mystery as birth. Nobody appears to have been born of his will. Nobody sincerely wishes to die either. It has been one of the craves of man to conquer old age and death. Our bodies succumb to diseases. Medical science has been there to save us from disease but the inevitable always happens, and whether we welcome it or not, one day we find ourselves in the clutches of death, and then there is no escape.

Where do we come from and finally where do we go? These are two eternal Quests which wise men have tried to answer in their own ways. We are the posers of this Quest. This quest is related to our own self, and yet we are ignorant. We do not know our own destiny. And this is one of the greatest surprises. We are the subject, as well as the object of this inquiry.

The self is neither born nor does it die. It is not made of

material parameters; it is not subject to biological or chemical changes. The soul is an infinitesimal entity. This has not to be confused with the Supreme Self, which is the Infinite entity. The infinite and infinitesimal can co-exist without being illogical.

Our present is a result of our entire past, and again with our accomplishments in the present, we shall be moving to the next life.

When a man is born, he is born with two heredities of which one is biological, which passes from father to son, from one generation to the other. The other is the intrinsic heredity, which the soul carries from its one life to the other. The two heredities work simultaneously in the present harmony without any conflict.

Our life is an everlasting life. One who is born must die, and one who dies is born again. There is no room for frustration. We have been marching on and on in our journey from an eternal time and shall go on like this. What we could not achieve in this life may be achieved in the next one. This journey has some purpose. The intrinsic infimitesimality of the soul in so many dimensions impose upon it certain limitations, and within those limitations, under the supreme care of our Benevolent Lord, we get opportunities after opportunities for manifestation of what is best in us and whatever would be the most blissful for us. Life has continuity, and has a purpose as well.

When an individual is born, the soul comes with a subtle body, with supragenetic code (The residential tendencies i.e. 'Sanskaras' of entire past). On this code (Sanskaras) is engraved the entire resultant in the subtlest language of its entire past. Thus everybody is born with a history, not of his parental race but of his own.

"Our life is a complex function of so many parameters that the future remains unpredictive. All that we know is that what we are today, we are as a result of our efforts, and we are the builders of our future. And since we have to build

our future, we need caution. This caution is provided by religion." [*Man and his religion*]

"If a man becomes capable of knowing God before leaving his physical body, then he attains salvation, and then after enjoying it for the fixed period (Paranta-kaal), takes rebirth (acquiring this physical body) in the beginning of the creation in some world." (Kathopanishad: 6/4)

"Those sages whose all doubts have been dispelled by thorough knowledge of the Vedic principles and those whose intellect has been cleared by practice of Yoga (of renunciation), they all come again (i.e. are reborn) after enjoying 'Moksha' (Salvation) for a 'Paranta-Kaal'. The duration of Paranta-Kaal is calculated as "36000 times of universal creation and dissolution." (*Mundaka Upanishad: Chapter 3, Section 2, and Aphorism # 6*)

Its soul's voice: "In my hundreds of birth I, previous to my attaining knowledge of God, was being held bound in, and protected by, different cages of bodies. But, now I, like a hawk breaking asunder and freed from the snare, have, by virtue of the force of the knowledge of Supreme Spirit, broken asunder the snare of bodies and emancipated". (*Aitereya Upanishad: Chapter 2, Aphorism 5*)

"Taking innumerable births in this universe" [*Shwetashatar Upanishad: Chapter 4, Aphorism 3*]

There are many self-testimony that show that there are innumerable births, until and unless, the soul attains emancipation.

The Vedic Sanskaras

It is very difficult to find an exact equivalent for the word "Sanskaar" in English. The closest one can get in English is the catholic Sacrament. It can also not be rendered by the word 'Ritual'. For, ritual is a term with limitation of meaning. It cannot capture the inherited aspect of the "Sanskaaras". It can also not be recognised as anything other than symbolic, especially since the rituals are not performed the right way in these times. People do not want to do them properly. The priests, most often, do not know exactly how to perform them. Even if they know how to perform them they do not know the meaning of what they chant.

The word "Sanskaaras" is generally used in the sense of "Ritual purification". But there is a deeper meaning to the word. Since purification is a process whereby one goes through stages of impurity to purify the word should be looked upon with some broader perspectives. Hindus believe, and modern science, especially genetics prove that the human body inherits a certain combination or permutation of genes. The word "Sanskaaras" thus refers to the value systems abstracted by structure and permutations of genes one inherits. Once activated at different stages of life by means of rituals, these "Sanskaaras" get activated, reinforced and direct life pattern and future direction of growth or decay of a human being.

By which the body, mind and soul become pure and illuminated, is called "Sanskaar" or "Sacrament".

Mahr'shi Dayananda Saraswati has defined the term 'Sanskaar' in the last portion of his evergreen book *"Light Of Truth"* in "A Statement of my Beliefs" as "Sanskaar is

that which contributes to the physical, mental and spiritual improvement of man from Conception to Cremation. There are sixteen Sanskaaras altogether. I hold that their due and proper observance is obligatory on all. Nothing should be done for the departed after the remains have been cremated."

Mahar'shi Charak has clearly defined the term 'Sanskaar' in his most popular book in the Ayurveda named 'Charak Samhita' as: "Depositing good attributes in place of (by removing) man's existing impurities, is called 'Sanskaar' (Sacraments)."

Mahar'shi Dayananda Saraswati while describing the importance of sacraments in preface of his evergreen book "Sanskaar-Vidhi" says: " By good body and soul because of these sacraments, one can achieve the practice of righteousness, acquisition of wealth, realization of legitimate desires and attainment of salvation, and his children become very deserving. Therefore, it is very noble for all men that they should perform the sacraments.

The Shatpath Brahman describes: "One should perform the sacraments with reverence. A child brings with him all his good and bad Sanskaaras (Residential tendencies) of previous infinite births at birth. Mother, father and teacher (Guru) make child's tendencies good with the sacraments, hence they are called the best laboratories of human-making". Because of these Sanskaras man can attain salvation hence one should perform the sacraments.

The root-indication of the sacraments exists in **the vedas** and other scriptures written by sages and seers describe them in detail. There are descriptions of these sacraments in literaturess of **Grihasutra like— Aashvaalaayan Griha-Sutra** there are descriptions of 12 sacraments, whereas in Manu-Smriti there are descriptions of 14 sacraments. Mahar'shi Dayananda Saraswati has described 16 sacraments in his book "Sanskaar-Vidhi" [Procedure of the Sacrament].

The Sixteen Sanskaaras (Sacraments):

1: Garbhadhan Sanskar: i.e. Sacrament of 'Impregnation'

Atharvaveda: (6.81-1,2,3), (6.17-1,2,3,4) and (5.25-1 to 13)

2: *Punsavanam:* [Atharvaveda: 3. 23 1 to 6; and Manrral-1; 1.11-1 to 6; 6 Yajurveda: 17/87 and 8/5]

3: *Seemaantonnayan:* [Rigveda: 3.8.4] [Atharvaveda: 11.7.3; 11. (5). 7.6; 11. (5). 7.26]

4: *Jaat-Karm:* Ceremony of newly born child [(Yajurveda: 8/28) (Paa. Griha Kaand: 1.16.1; 1.16.2 Dharma Aashlayana Griha:1-15-1)]

5: *Naam-Karan:* Naming ceremony [Yajurveda: 7/29]

6: *Nish-Kraman:* [Atharvaveda: 8.2.14 and 15]

7: *Anna-Praashan:* [Yajurveda: 11/83] [Atharvaveda: 8.2.18/19]

8: *Chudaa-Karm:* [Atharvaveda: 6.68.1,2,3]

9: *Karna-Vedh:* Peering of ears [Atharvaveda: 6.141.2; Yajurveda: 25.21; 29.40]

10: *Upanayan:* Sacred Thread ceremony [Atharvaveda: 11.5.7,3; 6.141.2; 6.133.2 to 5; 11.7.4; To 3; Yajurveda: 2/33,32/13]

11: *Vedarambh:* Beginning of the study of the Vedas;

12: Samaavartan: [Atharvaveda: 11.5.7.3; 11.5.7.6; 11.5.7.26; Rigveda: 3.8.4]

13: *Vivah-Sanskaar:* Marriage ceremony [Rigveda: 10.183.1,2,3; 10.27.12; 3.55.16; Yajurveda 3.60; Atharvaveda: 11.5. (7). 18; 14.1.17 and 18; 14.1.50 to 57; 14.2.52 And 73; 2.30.1 and 2; 2.36.1 to 8; 2.30.5]

14: *Vanaprasthashram:* Ceremony of Vaanaprastha [Rigveda: 10.146. 1 to 6; Yajurveda: 20.24] [Atharvaveda: 9.5.1; 19.41.1]

15: *Sanyaasashram:* Sacrament of anchorite [Rigveda: 9.113. 1 to 6] [Atharvaveda: 19.43.1 to 8]

16: *Antyeshti:* Last rites of the dead [Yajurveda: 40.15; [Atharvaveda: 18.2.56; 18.3.71]

Sanskaras have another meanings as the impressions of last life (birth), which come alongwith the Jiva in this present life i.e. Residential tendencies, also called Dynamic impulses or Intrinsic heredities.

The impressions of one's actions (good or bad) are registered with the 'Chitta' (sometimes, term 'mind' is also used in place of 'Chitta'). These impressions make deep grooves that compel one to react accordingly. These residential tendencies (Sanskaras) also become the cause of new actions that helps and inspires a man how to act next. These sacraments (which are registered in the 'Chitta' i.e. sub-conscious mind) go alongwith the soul after death, until the soul has not attained salvation. The subtle body remains with the soul unto salvation. After finishing the period of emancipation the soul gets the new body with the same obstructive media i.e. 'Antah-Karan'; hence the soul gets his last left 'Chitta'. This process is beginningless and endless and is under God's management. Re-birth is due to these residential tendencies.

'Chitta' is the storage of our actions, recorded with exactitude in a special memory. These recordings are like time bombs that will explode in the future. The sight of an object, the thinking of a thought, the performance of an act, even though very transitory, leave a complex trace in the Cosmic Memory (Akasha), which lasts beyond time, and leaves also an imprint in the subconscious mind. This subconscious imprint is called "Sanskaar" (dynamic impulse). The character of a man, his moral or mental status, his "talents", his "likes" and "dislikes", all are determined by his Sanskara, which are the product of his Karma (past actions). The Sanskaras transmigrate from incarnation to incarnation, never being lost. They act like seeds that will develop according to a specific pattern, which characterize each of them and which is closely related to the charge of the action that produced them.

"Our present is a result of our entire past, and again

with our accomplishments in the present, we shall be moving on to the next life.

When a man is born, he is born with two heredities, one that is biological, which passes from father to son, from one generation to the other. The other is the intrinsic heredity, which the soul carries from one life to the other. The two heredities work simultaneously in perfect harmony without any conflict. The intrinsic heredity is carried by a similar supragenetic code, made of non-matter, and existing as a non-material envelope round the soul. This non-material is known as the subtle body of the soul, just as the genes and genetic codes constitute the gross body of the same. Through this supragenetic code in the subtle body are preserved those supracharacteristics, which the soul carries from one body to the next, one after the other. As one passes from one life to other they remain dormant, or become active, may be altered, or replaced as the case may be. The soul carries as if the final resultant of these supracharacteristics from one stage to the other."

"When one dies, the biological envelop is left over here, and the soul within the supragenetic envelop (i.e. with its subtle body) passes on to its next life carrying its intrinsic heredity. The life continues on like this." [*Man and his religion*]

This intrinsic heredity is nothing but our residential tendencies or our past 'Sanskaras'.

Yajyopaveeta (Sacred Thread)

All Sanskaaras are equally important but because of space limitation in this book we have mentioned only 'Yajyopaveeta'. It is one of the sixteen 'Vedic Sanskaras' or "Sacraments" or "Religious rituals" according to teachings of the Vedas. All the Sanskaaras play a very important role in Vedic Dharma. Hence all these Sanskaaras are essential for man's physical, mental and spiritual development.

It is a culture and custom in Hindu tradition that when a child goes to school (Gurukula) to obtain education from his teacher, the first ritual done by his teacher is यज्ञोपवीत संस्कार "Yajyopaveeta Sanskar" or "Thread ceremony". This means that now the child has obtained the right of education and performing religious rituals like 'Yajna' etc.

"Yajyopaveeta" is also known as जनेयू 'Janeu', मङ्गल सूत्र 'Mangala-Sutra' and उपनयन 'Upa-Nayana'. In English it is called 'The sacred-thread'. It is an essential duty of all men and women to adopt this sacred thread. It is an important custom and sign in the Zoroastrian sect (Parsi) to adopt and wear the sacred thread. 'Mangala Sutra' means "the sacred thread", because wearing it brings prosperity in life. To understand the importance of this tiny sacred thread, just pick up one "Yajyopaveeta" and observe the following facts—

In this sacred thread which is white in color—there are three threads in it and in each thread, there exist three tiny threads (fibers)—it is 98 fingers long (because an average human body is 98 fingers long) with five knots that make the thread round. Now you have seen that there are all nine threads in the 'Yajyopaveeta' with five knots and white in

color. White is the symbol of purity and being made of cotton, it has no side effects.

(1) Many people are allergenic to nylon, polyester, and manmade chemical fibers or made from animals' hairs, woollen etc., but cotton is natural hence hygienic and also scientifically proved to be the best for the human body.

(2) Human body is approximately 98 fingers long, this also proves that the sacred thread which is also 98 fingers long, has effects on the full body.

(3) Five knots also indicate to perform five essential duties that is "worshipping of the five living Gods". There are more secrets to these five knots. There are five enemies of man i.e. sex, anger, greed, affection (delusion) and egotism. When the sacred thread is worn the student takes an oath to get rid of all these enemies by controlling his senses with intellect. These five enemies are the main hurdles (knots) that are to be conquered by man in his life. Whenever the person, who has worn the sacred thread, sees it while bathing or at any time during the day or night, he remembers his oath.

(4) There are nine tiny threads (fibers) in the 'Yajyopaveeta' that indicate the nine gates of the human body. Nine gates (Dwaaras) are two eyes, two ears, two nostrils, mouth and two genitals. One has to have one to one watchmen on these gates so that there should be no misuse of these openings of the body. The work of the eyes is to see either good or bad? When one sees good his Sanskaaras (tendencies) will be good otherwise his tendencies will ruin his present life and life to come in future. One should have control by Yogic exercises. Real pleasure of life is not outside. One has to go inside to meet his long time eternal happiness i.e. the bliss. Refer Atharvaveda (10.2.31) for "Eight Chakras" and "Nine Dwaaras". One should

use them (nine gates of the body) properly to get success in life to reach the goal i.e. salvation.

(5) Three threads of the Yajyopaveeta (main threads) have very important meanings:

On every human being there are three kinds of debts viz. मातृ-पितृ ऋण 'Maatri-Pitri-Rina', ऋषि ऋण 'Rishi-Rina' and देव ऋण 'Deva-Rina'. These debts (obligation) are on every human being.

Mother and father are supposed to be the first teachers of man. They are the creators of our physical body. One should be grateful to them because of their selfless service towards their children. One can never pay off the debt of this parents. One has to pay off his/her debt by giving his/her children education and by bringing them up as their parents have done for them.

The second debt is 'Rishi-Rina' i.e. gratitude towards one's teachers or Gurus who give meaning and a second life to their students by giving them true knowledge (Manu 2. 148, 149, 150). The Guru is man's true guide who leads him on to the right path. The Guru develops good Sanskaaras in his pupils' life by education and religious rituals. Hence to pay off their (Gurus') debts one should obey his commandments and give educational help to other needy students.

The third debt is 'Deva-Rina' i.e. debts of living and insensate deities. The living deities are —mother, father, teacher (Spiritual master or Guru), altruistic teacher of humanity (Atithi) and the husband for the wife and vice-versa. It is the worship of the above that leads one to God. The insensate deities are earth, water, fire, air and ether. Man should try not to pollute these deities as because of them we receive food, shelter and clothing.

To pay off their (insensate objects) debt one must perform 'Yajna' daily. Yajna is also good for man to live in a pollution free environment. Lord of all deities (living and insensate) is the Lord of the universe—GOD. He is called

'Mahaadeva' because He is the lord of lords. One ought to worship Him daily in the morning and evening. God is the prime source of all true knowledge.

'Yajyopaveet's three threads also teach man that he ought to be very cautious about his thoughts, words and actions. There should be oneness in thought, word and action.

Three sacred threads also indicate that this world is tri-attributed viz. सत्त्व 'Sattva', रजस् 'Rajas' and तमस् 'Tamas' and because of them everything is entangled. Man's body is also the means of salvation hence to be free from the clutches of birth and death, one must try to get rid of worldly attachment by renouncing it whilst experiencing it.

"Tena Tyaktena Bhunjithaa" (Yajurveda: 40/1).

Three sacred threads are also the symbol of three eternal entities i.e. God, the Prakriti (the matter) and an infinite number of infinitesimal souls. Without true knowledge of all these three eternal entities, no one can attain 'Moksha' i.e. emancipation or salvation.

Nine fibers of the 'Yajyopaveeta' have also one more important secret that the imagination of the nine deities whose nature, attributes and characteristics ought to be adopted by man. These nine deities are:

(1) *Omkara:* God's knowledge and light of Oneness.

(2) *Agni:* Light, illumination and remover of sin.

(3) *Ananata:* Infinite stability and resolution.

(4) *Chandrama:* Sweetness, coolness and loveliness.

(5) *Pitrigana:* Love and blessings.

(6) *Prajpati:* Maintenance of the masses, love and happiness.

(7) *Vayu:* Holiness, vigorousness, movability and sustenance.

(8) *Surya:* Light, removal of darkness and purifier of impurities.

(9) Sarva-Deva: Divine and simple living.

The sacred thread gives a man an important preaching

for the adoption of all the above-said attributes to make him great illuminated and a happy man in his life.

Yajyopaveeta, thus is very sacrosanct thread full of knowledge and science. If understood and worn, this white sacred thread will change the life of man into happiness, and for those who are ignorant and do not know it's value, it is just a thread.

The Yajyopaveeta Mantras:

ओ३म् यज्ञोपवीतं परमं पवित्रं प्रजापतेर्यत्सहजं पुरस्तात्।
आयुष्यमग्र्यं प्रतिमुञ्च शुभ्रं यज्ञोपवीतं बलमस्तु तेजः ॥ 1 ॥

*"OM Yajyopaveetam Paramam Pavitram
Prajapateryatsahajam Purastat,
Aayushyamagrahyam Pratimuncha Shubhram
Yajyopaveetam Balamastu Tejah".(1)*

यज्ञोपवीतमसि यज्ञस्य त्वा यज्ञपवीतेनोपनह्यामि ॥ 2 ॥

*"Yajyopaveetamasi Yajnasya Twa
Yajyopaveetenopanahyaami". (2)*

Yajyopaveeta is to be retentive for mankind. It is to be worn (kept) on the left side shoulder of round to the right side of the waist, under the right arm. It goes over the (touching) heart and ends at the waist line, which means that one has accepted the sacred thread on the his/her shoulder. He/she will not forget his/her oath to retain it to perform all his duties to attain the ultimate goal of life i.e. emancipation. There is one more important secret of Yajyopaveeta that starts from one's shoulder goes touching the heart and ends at the waist, this indicates all the senses which one must have control over. This Yajyopaveeta is to be worn up to the time of death or one can remove it in two conditions. *Firstly,* when it becomes dirty, and *secondly* when one takes renunciation (Sanyaas). Hence there is a ritual to accept the sacred thread from childhood to 'Sanyaas Aashram' i.e. fourth or last quarter of one's life. A true Sanyasi always

preaches the religion, which he practices in his own pious life.

It is to be kept in mind that one should only accept a Yajyopaveeta, which is always white in colour. It has been seen in different customs that at some special functions or at some religious ceremonies, non-Vedic mythological and demonological Purohits tie some coloured threads (red, yellow, black etc.) on their Yajmaanas wrists at the start of certain rituals. This is a very wrong custom and procedure that should be removed from the fashionable society. Yajyopaveeta is not a fashion-thread, it is really a sacred thread. One should have respect for the religion of humanity. It is advisable to those so-called Purohits or Pundits that they should not play with the feelings of ignorant but religious people. Yajyopaveeta is always white in colour and made of cotton thread, consists of nine tiny threads, which make three main threads, 98 fingers long with five ties to give it a round shape.

Now-a-days people wear a golden chain instead of Yajyopaveeta. This can be treated as fashion, not Upanayan or Yajyopaveeta! Those purohits or pundits, who make the Yajmaans to wear a golden chain in place of the Yajyopaveeta, are performing anti-Vedic rituals.

This is a sinful act. These kind of wicked-customs should be banned. God gives them intellect to accept truth and renounce all that is untrue!

The great sage Manu says that Shudras should not wear the sacred thread. 'Shudra' is one who is impure, ignorant, illiterate and who does not want to study and cannot pickup anything when some one teaches him, who behaves like a fool and performs all low class deeds.

Now it's in the readers' court to decide-what will happen if one does not wear the sacred thread? One who knows the importance of Yajyopaveeta (the sacred thread), and still he/she[19] does not want to wear it, shows that he/she is ashamed of wearing it. What will you say to such people?

The Rigveda 10.57.2 commands: " It is a desire of common people to adopt (to wear) the sacred thread that is popular in the learned society. We should obtain the 'Yajyopaveeta' in proper way i.e. by Vedic ritual."

It is clear that one, who refuses to wear the sacred thread, is unauthorized (i.e. he has no right) to perform religious rituals and remains away from true knowledge of the Vedas. What can be worse fate for him than this? One who knows the importance, who knows the commandments of the Holy Vedas, still makes some excuses not to wear Yajyopaveeta, then who will be a bigger Shudra than that person? Who can be that Asura? Being a learned person and to behave like an illiterate person, it is really a trait of an illiterate and ignorant person.

Yajyopaveeta is the symbol of human-custom.

Yoga

सप्त स्वसृररुषीर्वावशानो विद्वान्मध्व उज्जभारा दृशे कम्।
अन्तर्येमे अन्तरिक्षे पुराजा इच्छन्वव्रिमविदत्पूषणस्य ।।

Sapta Swasrirarushirvavashano Vidvanmadhwa Ujjabhara Drishe Kam, Anteryema Anterikshe Puraja Ichchhanvrimavidatpooshanasya." (Rigveda: 10.5.5)

Which means: 1. Nose, 2. Tongue, 3. Eyes, 4. Ears 5. Skin, 6. Mind and 7. Intellect—they are called the seven sisters of the Soul. By controlling them properly in life man is elevated and attains emancipation.

Yoga is a great gift given to us by the great tradition and beliefs of the Vedic culture. When practiced, it allows for complete development of the human body, mind and soul. It helps to develop the physical, mental and the spiritual aspects of life. Yoga allows for the entire body to be healthy and happy giving the person a longer and healthier way of living.

The word 'Yoga' stems from its Sanskrit root 'Yuj' which means, "to go into trance, to meditate." Others however derive it from a root, which means to join: and Yoke in English is said to be the same word as Yoga. But the true meaning of Yoga is " integration of the union of the body and mind with the soul and then with God". Both roots are feasible. In the case of the root to join, to come nearer so that there remains no space in between the two, being two separate entities but look like one. Yoga would mean the science that teaches the method of joining the human soul with God. Yoga is a technique by which the soul gets communed with God.

Yoga has been generally come to be understood only as a fitness regime that is helpful in maintaining a healthy

body. Few appreciate the huge promise that Yoga holds for benefiting the mind and soul, and its capacity to aid man in his endeavour to unfold his higher consciousness till he ultimately realises his Self.

The origin of Yoga and its principles were first described in the Vedas, then the Upanishads, Yog-Darshan, Geeta, and the literature of Hatha Yoga like Shiv Samhita and Gheranda Samhita.

Of all the system of psychology that we know of today, Patanjali's system of yoga stands the highest. Because of the ease of its practice, and its scientific approach to spirituality. Yoga is a scientific process of restraining the Chitta (mindstuff) from taking on various modifications. It imparts the student the technology, which helps him to systematically unfold his higher consciousness by controlling his external as well as internal activities. The student is gradually taken through physical, moral, mental and spiritual exercises before he reaches the ultimate state of realisation. There he establishes himself as a free soul never to be born again and again till Paraant-kaal.

The word 'Mindstuff' is used for the Sanskrit word 'Chitta' which is not only mind but also all that goes to form perception. The western psychologists misinterpret "Mind" as the instrumental side of consciousness that is characterised by reason, feeling or emotion, sensation and so forth.

The truth is that the Chitta is one of the mind-stuff called "Antah-Karan" that is a composition of all such instrumental objects like—Mind, Intellect—Chitta and Egoism. [Mana, Budhi, Chitta and Ahankara.] Budhi or Intellect is as a psycho-physical medium, for receiving and reflecting all sensations. The mind is an agent of consciousness with its constantly active condition. The egoism, which makes a distinction in the knowledge of the individual as apart from the others. However, intellect, discriminative knowledge, reasons etc. also form the other

half or the positive side of this mindstuff (Chitta). The Chitta changes its forms every moment of its existence. However, it takes of different colours or qualities. As a psychologist puts it, "Life is but a constant expression of our inner activities".

What has Yoga to do with this Chitta? Mahar'shi Patanjali says that the restraint of such mental modifications is the key aim of Yoga. Thus Yoga in its real sense, is not the process of throwing a rope in the air and climbing it, or any such foolish notions that we harbour about it.

Modifications of the mind (चित्त वृत्ति Chitta Vritti) are not only undesirable but are also detrimental to higher spiritual pursuits. Through the unwholesome activities of the Chitta, the soul is obstructed from revealing itself in its original illumination. But the very moment it is restrained from taking various modifications, the Self, as it were, gets a chance to centre and abide in its own nature.

The great Sage Patanjali explains the Soul not merely as Spirit or as Conscious Intelligence but calls it "Seer", that it is the real Cogniser and not the other instrumental agents of perception such as the Chitta and the senses—physical and others. So what happens to the soul when the Chitta is not restrained and when it is in its active condition? In such cases the Soul begins to identify itself with the modifications created by the mind. When the Chitta keeps modifying, the Self is dragged into the identification of these forms, which do not actually belong to it. In reality, it is not the Soul, which enjoys any action performed by us but the Chitta.

Yoga can tone the body and mind. Yoga is the most famous, popular, hallowed and most standardizing form of Indian yoga systems. It is said that there are primarily three types of Indian yoga systems—Raja Yoga, Kriya Yoga and Purna Yoga. In Srimad Bhagvad Geeta, Yogeshwar Shri Krishna has emphasized four types of Yoga e.g.

1: Jnana-Yoga or Sankhya Yoga i.e. the Yoga of knowledge,

2: Karma-Yoga or the Yoga of action without attachment,

3: Bhakti-Yoga or the Yoga of devotion, and

4: Raj-Yoga[1] or the Yoga through mind control.

Yogeshwar Shri Krishna discussed these with Arjuna in most subtle way. But all these Yogic subtle hints need deep meditation on each Shloka i.e. verse, their decoding and transformation into yogic steps. These can only be unlocked with the help of a preceptor or a Guru who himself is well versed in Yoga. Only a great Kriya-Yogi can unfold those secrets. Total surrender of the ego-self to the divine mother i.e. the almighty God, is the essence of Purna Yoga. Lord Krishna has pronounced all the steps of Purna Yoga in the Geeta. Lastly, the Geeta advises that salvation can be achieved by following any one, or all the four, paths of yoga.

The great sage Patanjali's Yoga system is based on Raja-yoga.

योगश्चित्तवृत्तिनिरोधः

"*Yogashchittavritinirodhah*" (*Yoga Darshana*: 1.2) means "Yoga is the restraint of the mental modifications."

Actually the correct word in Hindi is "Yog" but when written in English it is usually pronounced as "Yoga".

Commonly the word 'Yoga' is used for exercises and different postures of the body (Aasana), but that is one part/ step or accessory of the Yoga. There are eight steps of Yoga popularly known as "Ashtanga Yoga" i.e. "Octapartite Yoga". Yoga is the one and only straight way to attain the bliss of God. No other way reaches there. The eight steps of

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1. Raj Yoga can be further divided into three parts namely—(a) Laya Yoga or Mantra Yoga or chanting of God's personal and original name "OM" etc. (b) Hatha Yoga or Aasana, Pranaayaama or bodily and breath exercises and (c) Kundalini Yoga i.e. arousal of the energy centers 1. Mooladhaar = root, 2. Swadhishthaan = spleen, 3. Manipur = solar plexus or naval, 4. Anaahad = heart, 5. Vishuddha = throat, 6. Aajana = brow or third eye and 7. Sahasraar = crown.

the Yoga are—Restraint (Yama), Observance (Niyama), Posture (Aasana), Regulation of breath (Pranaayaama), Abstraction (Pratyaahaar), Concentration (Dhaaranaa), Meditation (Dhyaana) and Trance (Samaadhi).

यमनियमाऽसनप्राणायामप्रत्याहारधारणाध्यानसमाधयोऽष्टावङ्गानि।

"Yamaniyaamasanapraanaayaampratyaahaaradhaar-anaadhyaanasamaadhayoAshtaavangaani"

[*Patanjali's Yoga Darshana:* 2.29]

These eight-fold stages of Yoga consist of five external accessories, as if, compared with the last three internal accessories. These internal steps viz. Concentration or Dhaaranaa, Meditation or Dhyaana and Trance or realisation of God i.e. Samaadhi are collectively called "Samyama" i.e.

त्रयमेकत्र संयमः

"Trayamekatra Samyamah" (Yoga: 3.4)

Octapartite Yoga i.e. अष्टाङ्ग योग Eight step or stage of the Yoga:

There are eight steps or stages of Yoga out of which the first five steps are outer and remaining three are inner steps. The Outer steps are as follows:

1. यम Yama: There are five "Yamas" i.e. 'Restraints': [Ahimsa-Satya-Asteya-Brahmacharya-Aparigraha.]

(i) **अहिंसा Ahimsa:** Abstinence from injury or harmlessness i.e. non-violence or love;

(ii) **सत्य Satya:** Strict devotion to veracity i.e. truth;

(iii) **अस्तेय Asteya:** Abstinence from theft i.e. honesty in word, deed and thought;

(iv) **ब्रह्मचर्य Brahmacharya:** Continence i.e. abstinence from sexual indulgence. and

(v) **अपरिग्रह Aparigraha:** Abstinence from avariciousness i.e. abstinence from the headlong pursuit of worldly things and lastly freedom from the pride of one's possessions such as wealth and power. (Yoga Darshana: 2.30)

2. नियम Niyama i.e. The observances: [Shouch-Santosh-Tapa-Swadhyaya-Ishwara Pranidhaan]. They are

also of five kinds.

(i) शौच **Shouch:** Physical and mental cleanliness;

(ii) संतोष **Santosh:** Contentment—which does not mean contentedness, physical interia, but which does mean that you do your utmost to attain your object, but are not carried away by the resulting profit or loss, joy or sorrow;

(iii) तप **Tapa:** Purificatory action i.e. austerity i.e. devotion to duty regardless of consequences, which burns up impurities)

(iv) स्वाध्याय **Swadhyaaya:** Study of the Vedas that is acquisition and dissemination of true knowledge, and

(v) ईश्वर प्राणिधान **Ishwara Pranidhaan:** the making of the Lord the motive of all action i.e. everything left to God in belief and trust or resignation to the Will of God through extreme devotion to Him. [*Yoga Darshana:* 2.32]

3. आसन Aasana or Posture: Posture is steadily easy. Body postures help to purify body and mind. Aasanas help to improve all internal glands, organs and systems such as the digestive system, the circulatory systems etc. [*Yoga Darshana:* 2.46]

4. प्राणायाम Pranayaama or Regulation of breath: Pranayama is the stoppage of the inspiratory and expiratory movements, which follow, when that has been secured. [*Yoga Darshan:* 2.49]

5. प्रत्याहार Pratyaahaar i.e. Abstraction: By which the senses do not come into contact with their objects and follow as-it-were the nature of the mind. Control of senses of reflection. Once the mind is controlled, it helps to control our sensory organs and allows them to move beyond the exterior world to the interior soul. [*Yoga Darshana:* 2.54]

The three inner steps: *Dhaaranaa*, Dhyaana and Samaadhi.

6. धारणा Dhaaranaa i.e. Concentration: Concentration is the steadfastness of the mind. [*Yoga Darshan:* 3.1]

7. ध्यान Dhyaana i.e. Meditation: The continuation of

the mental-effort (to understand) is meditation.

[*Yoga Darshana:* 3.2]

8. समाधि Samaadhi or Trance i.e. realisation of God: The same when shining with the light of the object alone, and devoid, as-itwere, of itself, is trance (or contemplation, Samaadhi). [*Yoga Darshana:* 3.3]

The Yama, Niyama, Aasana and Pranayama are the essential parts of the Karma Yoga. They keep the body and mind healthy. Pratyahara and Dharna are the parts of the Jnana Yoga. With the help of Dhyana and Samaadhi, the meditator gives his complete body, mind and soul to be fully absorbed in God. This 'Samarpan' or giving of Self to God is then called the Bhakti-Yoga.

For the student of Yoga, firstly he has to attain the position of having control over all his desires so that he is able to restrain the mental modifications. This is possible by practice and desirelessness (*Yoga Darshana: 1.12*) and when he acquires in him the faculty of essential cognition i.e. 'Ritambhara' (*Yoga Darshana:* 1.48). This 'Ritambhara' gives birth to the residual potencies, which burn all other residual potencies (*Yoga Darshana:* 1.50). When this last residual potency also vanishes by practice of 'Ishwara-Pranidhan' i.e. leaving everything unto God, the student of Yoga attains the stage of restraining of mental modifications (*Yoga Darshana:* 1.2). Now the goal is reached when all being suppressed, which results in the seedless trance i.e. 'Samaadhi' (*Yoga Darshana:* 1.51).

When all the impurities are washed away, there is nothing in between God and the soul. The body is the best medium to reach God. In the end even this physical body does not remain and the soul attains emancipation. This is the best psychic-power of Yoga.

Managing Distress through Yoga:

(By Shri Rajat Agarwal M.B.A. Gurukul Kangri University, Haridwar)

Life of a modern executive is full of stress. The word "Stress" has got a lot of importance in the recent past. The biggest trauma with this word is that people have considered stress only in negative aspect. Most of the time, we remain under its influence giving us many negative feelings and an idea contrary to the facts behind this stress. A majority of the people think that stress is something to be avoided at all costs. However, stress has a positive side as well *i.e.* it serves as an indication of positive growth. The presence of stress, in a moderate level, is necessary for life and existence. It inculcates a desire to face the many physical senses and helps one focus on the task at hand.

Stress: Stress is defined as a dynamic condition in which an individual is confronted with an opportunity, constraint or demand related to what he or she desires and for which the outcome is perceived to be both uncertain and important.

There can be two types of stress—positive and negative.

Eustress is synonymous with healthy essential stress produced for example by joy, any kind of positive impulse, sensible recreational activities, sports practiced as a hobby, etc.

Distress is synonymous with negative stress that has to be managed or rather controlled, e.g. continuous mental or physical strain of any kind, anger, frustration, states of tension seemingly without hope.

However, even high and prolonged Eustress can turn dangerous. Thus, stress is the reaction to a demanding situation on the human physiology. Stress can occur at two levels:

1. **Physical Stress** like accidents burns, major surgeries, major infection etc. which make demands on the entire physiology.

2. **Psychological stress** which can occur independently or as reaction to the physical stress. Examples are fear,

anxiety, tension, worry, jealousy, hatred, anger, excitement, emotional conflicts etc.

More common than these physical stresses are the psychological stresses. A man who is trying to live a successful life as per expectations and norms of the society today is continually challenged with rapidly accumulating stress. In the fast moving social set up with innumerable changes, there is no time for the individual to look back and think about what is happening to his body and mind. Today's man can think and act much faster than what he did half a century back. This speed has not limited itself only to the level where he can be most efficient in his mental and physical capabilities but has moved further to ungovernable levels. This activity in the mind is so much and so fast that the system cannot cope up with it any longer. This speed has also made human beings emotionally hypersensitive. Small things can upset a person psychologically and emotionally to such a great extent that it can lead to disasters. In order to show civilized and social decorum there is a constant effort at suppressing these emotional upsurges. Highly sensitized emotions which are suppressed in today's fast pace of living style are recognised as the most important factor which results in several stress induced disorders.

Yoga:

Yoga, far for being mere physical or breathing demonstration of magic or supernatural powers, is a science of future, with a holistic vision relevant to progressive society. Yoga is a conscious process for raising us from our animal instincts to normal discrimination and elevating us to manifest the immense potentialities dormant in us. Yoga not only works to bring fitness and vigour to the physical body, but also harness our will and emotions and to expand our power of analysis, insights and visions.

Four main streams of Yoga techniques could be identified. They utilize the four major faculties in man's

intellect, emotion, will power and the executive capacities through the sensory and motor apparatus. They are called—Jnana Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Raj Yoga and Karma Yoga respectively.

The origin of stress and tension, the mechanism of growth and their various disastrous manifestations can be understood totally through the path of Jnana Yoga. Bhakti Yoga teaches the art of invoking emotions intensifying them and diffusing them at will. Bhakti Yoga teaches the right way to handle emotions through surrender. Ultimately Bhakti Yoga brings such mastery by which we reach the very basis of emotions namely SILENCE. Harnessing the will and capacity to do or undo in different way, is the technique of Raja yoga. In meeting the challenge of stress, techniques of harnessing the will can work wonders. Karma Yoga teaches the art of working in relaxation with total "Awareness in action". Application of the Karma techniques helps to reduce the accumulation of tension and stress and thus makes possible a tension free performance. Thus Yoga with physical, mental and emotional personalities approach the challenge of stress.

Concept of Stress in Yoga:

Stress according to Yoga is imbalance. Imbalance is misery. Imbalances at emotional level manifest as upsurges, which are caused by strong likes and dislikes. At the psychological level the imbalances lead to conflicts and often manifest as petty and narrow ego-centric behaviour. Lack of holistic knowledge and balanced outlook at the subtle level are responsible for imbalances found at grosser levels.

Thus, while understanding stress, a holistic concept of human is kept in view and not merely his bodily existence. Taittireya Upanishad has presented this holistic concept systematically as having 5 major Sheaths of existence. These are namely—

(1) Annamaya Kosha, (2) Pranamaya Kosha, (3)

Manomaya Kosha, (4) Vijnanamaya Kosha, (5) Anandamaya Kosha.

The great sage Patanjali uses the term Klesha that aptly describes stress. In his text "Yoga Sutras" the Kleshas have been described thus:

अविद्याऽस्मिता रागद्वेषाभिनिवेशाः पञ्च क्लेशाः ।

Avidya asmita raga dvesha abhiniveshah kleshah (*Yoga Sutra*-11-3)

In our original state, we are totally stress free. We are blissful. We may call it perfection. When this state gets disturbed, when there is an imbalance even at the subtle level, thinking starts. Ignorance (Avidya) has set in. This Avidya leads to further thinking and stress is built up. This loads to Asmita, the ego-centric behaviour I-ness-my mind', 'my thoughts'. 'My feelings', 'my body' etc. This leads to strong likes and dislikes. It is then that the emotional upsurges start. Tossed up and down in these emotional imbalances, a large amount of energy is spent. Speed increases.

Thus the concept of stress is presented in a most comprehensive way from the subtle level in its grossest manifestation by Patanjali. Excessive speed brings imbalance, leads to impaired efficiency and results in deterioration in the quality of life.

Yogic Management of Stress:

Yoga uses the approach to work at all five Sheaths to bring back the balance, in describing the process for elimination of stress. Patanjali has used the term thinning which shows that it is not a sudden elimination but a gradual systematic process of moving from a higher stress level to lower ones.

By using the techniques of Yoga, we can learn to expand our horizons, increase our capacities and manifest our dormant potentialities. To achieve a stress free and blissful life one must learn the three cardinal principles of

Yoga. Relax the body. Slow down the breath. Calm the mind.

Unless we recognise the manifestations of tension and stress, we continue to live with them. Then there could hardly be a chance for the release of such packed up tension and stress. Increased Pulse rate, high breathing rate, haphazard and imbalanced breathing between the two nostrils, periodic outbursts of anger, fear, depression, restlessness, lack of concentration decreasing clarity in thinking are some of the usual manifestations of stress and tension, many of which we normally do not recognise until they become painful and cause problem. Recognition thus could go a long way, in remedying the problems. Often it is said—Recognition is half the solution. The key to recognise is to stimulate, relax and look within.

Taking first point of stimulation one can classify stimulators at physical level, mental level, emotional level, intellectual level and at the spiritual level to recognise imbalances at these levels. With this variety of stimulations and the corresponding relaxation through Yoga techniques, the stress is released gradually and systematically taking us to higher or subtle states of consciousness.

Meditation

[Medication of All Evils]

ध्यानं निर्विषयं मनः ।

"Dhyaanam Nirvishayam Manah"

(Sankhya Darshan: 6/25)

means "The state of mind when remains objectivitated i.e. without any thought (when the mind is away from worldly objects, but remains connected with the self) is called the 'Dhyaana' or 'Meditation'. It is clear with this Sankhya-Sutra that meditation is the state of continuous non-objectiveness of mind, which means when mind is away from all wordily things i.e. objectless.

तत्र प्रत्यैकतानता ध्यानम् ।

"Tatra Pratyayaikataanataa Dhyaanam"

(Yog-Sutra: 3/2)

which mean, "Sustained concentration (Dharnaa[1]) is meditation (Dhyaana).

Meditation is of two types: First is "Samprajnaata" i.e. where the meditator is conscious of self and the act of meditation and second is "Asamparajnaata" when even this consciousness is lost and meditator Experiences only the bliss of Omnipresent God.

Meditation is a journey within, to meet our own consciousness. But to achieve higher state of consciousness, of deep silence of 'Samaadhi' and Meditation, one has to transcend all words and all thoughts. No language can lead

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1. Concentration is the fixing of the Chitta (mind stuff) upon a particular object. This is Dharnaa. (*Yog-Sutra:* 3/1)

us there. Therefore, talking of that state, declare Upanishads:

यतो वाचो निवरत्तन्ते अप्राप्य मनसा सह।

"Yato Vacho Nivartante, Apaapya Manasaa Saha" means that "state, where words cease to be, cannot be achieved through mind".

Although everybody seems to be talking of Meditation these days, but few really practice it regularly and know the meaning of "Meditation".

Beginners often start meditation with too many expectations, waiting for something to happen. When nothing happens they are disappointed and give up the practice of meditation. They imagine that by simply sitting in a straight-backed position with their eyes closed, they will reach in the state of 'Samaadhi'. But this is not possible because most adults have a sharp sense of ego problem, which keeps them confined and restricted.

It is recommended to all new practitioners that they should start with very short sessions, not more than five or ten minutes at a time. These periods may be repeated several times and each time the attitude should be of relaxed stillness, expecting nothing, but ready for anything.

The human mind is full of thoughts—random and never ceasing. It is impossible for the average person to stop these thoughts and the only way to get some control over them is to adopt a steady watching attitude. Without this, each thought will hook itself on to another thought and another.

It helps if you realise that thoughts generally fall into three categories — remembering, planning and dreaming. If you are remembering, then you are lingering uselessly in the past, which can be both repetitive and obsessive. Just let it go. Don't get involved. If your mind is busy with planning, you are thinking of the future, your aims, desires and hopes. Dreaming is self-explanatory. Do not get involved. Let the thoughts come and go without clinging to them. Five minutes is all you are allowing yourself, so there is no

expectation, no strain. The quality of meditation and not the duration is what you are interested in for the present. Meditation has been described as a mind suspended in space—a pure and complete awareness without clinging.

There are many aids to meditation. There is a Mantra, which repeated in your mind will eventually stop random thoughts. There is a candle flame on which you can concentrate. Or you can simply concentrate on your breathing. All these methods are effective, but only if you take it lightly, giving only 25 per cent of your attention to them, with the remaining 75 per cent of your mind relaxed and floating in space.

The sitting posture is important since a straight spine and all the different Chakras, ensure that energy flows smoothly and the mind calms down and is at ease. But even here it is not necessary to go to extreme. You can sit cross-legged on a cushion. The legs can be folded easily and not rigidly in the lotus pose. You may even sit on a chair with feet flat on the ground. Whichever way you sit you should be comfortable so that you can sit for as long as necessary.

Scientific truths about Meditation:

A person sitting quite and contemplating, with no purpose or aims except that of experiencing himself and his oneness with the world, is meditating. Studies by Herbert Benson, a Harvard cardiologist, show that meditation produces psychological changes which include reduced heart rate and blood pressure, as well as reduced oxygen consumption, reduced blood lactate level (associated with anxiety) and reduced respiratory rate. The body is deeply relaxed while the mind remains alert. Benson calls this 'the relaxation response', which counteracts state of fear, anger and anxiety.

At the psychological level, with regular meditation there is deceased anxiety, a higher level of relaxation at all levels, and progress towards self-atualisation. The meditator begins to experience in a more positive way, and a more

peaceful and secure self-concept is developed. Physical dysfunctions such as lack of sleep, fatigue, headaches lessen or disappear altogether.

Regular meditation increases empathy, concern and interest in the well-being of others. Today all doctors agree that stress and anxiety play a role in the development of many diseases.

In meditation alpha waves increase reflecting an extremely restful, non-anxious and non-problem solving mental state. After successful meditation the person is relaxed, with a greater capacity for creativity, love and compassion.

When someone talks about 'meditation' it's understood that this term is related to something that is spiritual (inner) world. It's one hundred per cent right. Meditation means to realise/find/feel of some super-conscious thing to get peace of mind, which is always there, but because of ones ignorance and laziness one is unable to seek/search it. That is why man is always unhappy and unsatisfied in his life, even after getting all kinds of comforts in this materialistic world. Something is missing! of course! Something is missing! But, what is that something, which is missing? In the Vedic philosophy this something is nothing but—the Bliss (Anand)—the bliss of God. The term "Anand" can be defined, as the spiritual happiness of the self.

The soul is in search of the real spiritual happiness but after coming to this beautiful and amazing wonderful materialistic world, It* forgets everything because of his limited knowledge. It (the soul) wanders after illuminated and colorful material things in this world made of Tri-attributed Prakriti. *The soul has no gender but being a sensate or Chetan thing, it can be·pronounced in masculine/feminine manner.

Mind is the most important thing and without mind's involution one can not meditate. Meditation is nothing but to think of self-consciousness, but in philosophical point of view, Meditation is defined as a technique or an art of

concentration. To control the mind is not an easy job, one needs lots of practice, and practice makes a man perfect. One thing, here, is to be noted that mind is not a conscious thing like the soul, but it is an inert thing that cannot do anything by its own. The soul is its master and master should be alert. When any work is given to the mind, it will be busy and cannot wander of its own. This is one of the method by which the mind can be controlled easily. "A will, will find a way", so one has to practice.

Many people believe that the mind is the slave of the senses, on the contrary the mind is said to be their king (Boss), all senses are under mind's control, and the mind is under intellect's control. Soul is the master of our physical (inert) body and all organs are its instruments (means) to work.

The mind functions the way we want. For desired results in any sphere of activity, the mind needs to be focused. Thus, an individual must have control over it and its cravings. Striving to fulfil each desire leads to even more desires. All endeavours, all efforts and struggles must be directed towards striving to attain this goal—of keeping the mind in control—rather than seeking the fulfillment of every desire.

F.A.Q.: "How do we control the mind and how do we control our desires?"

It is a common complaint that "My mind is not in my control, many thoughts protrude in mind and the more I try to restrain them, the more they protrude." etc. But all these beliefs are false. The reality is that the mind is a sort of inanimate thing, which is manifested out of insentient Prakriti. Hence it is not conscious. Therefore thought, cannot protrude in the mind itself nor the mind itself can raise any thought. It is the conscious soul, which is behind this insensate mind. When our conscious soul desires to raise any kind of virtuous or non-virtuous thoughts in the mind then and then only that thought protrudes related to that subject.

Just as a cassette or tape, records various types of sounds, similarly the mind is the storage of our thoughts in the form of rites. When a person with his desire and effort switches on the tape recorder then sounds are heard but sounds are not heard by themselves. In the same manner when the soul with its desires and efforts raises rites stored in the mind then and then only thoughts are produced. This is one of the methods of working of our mind.

Apart from this, working of the mind should be understood like working of camera equipment. Just as a photographer intends to take the picture of any particular object, he turns the camera switch, stretches the picture on roll through the medium of lens and does not take the photo of the object, which he does not desire. Exactly in the same manner the soul stores the knowledge of an object in the mind through the medium of all senses and body organs—the thing for which he wants to collect knowledge. Body is similar to a camera, conscious soul is to be the photographer, the mind is like a roll on which pictures are drawn and organs are like lens, in this example. In the same manner just as scooter, car, fan, machine etc. i.e. inert machines do not run, work or stop themselves without conscious human effort. Exactly in the same way, unconscious inert mind cannot run nor can it think to run towards any subject without the desire and inspiration of a conscious soul.

Only because of ignorance, human-consciousness takes the mind only as the propagator of subjects and does not accept himself as the true driver of the mind. But when conscious-soul acknowledges his own consciousness and doer-ship and inertness and means-form of mind, then keeping the mind under his own control (authority), he drives it according to his own desires. A learned ascetic of proper and discreet knowledge, keeps his mind under control and drives it according to his will, as worldly person runs the vehicle, he drives it according it his own will.

Just as a fresh car driver says, "My car runs at very high speed and doesn't stop even if I wish to stop it. When I want to drive it on the left side, it runs on the right side. If I want to drive it on the road it goes off the road". In such circumstances we shall say, " This person doesn't know how to drive a car and he doesn't have enough experience". Now here is a matter to think whether the car runs or stops by itself? Does it move right or left by itself? Certainly not! It is an ignorance or fault of the learner. Exactly in the same manner, it should be understood for the inanimate mind that it does not propagate towards any of its subjects, just, as a car cannot move by itself on the road.

Yoga perseverer or meditator should remember one thing that, soon after taking a posture during devotion period, he may make the following determinations :

> "My mind is inanimate. I am the conscious soul who drives it. This inanimate mind doesn't raise any subject without my desire and effort. At this time, I will keep it under my possession (authority) and adjunct it in thinking of Ishwar and will not allow it to run towards any other worldly subjects".

Assistance is sought in controlling the mind with such determination. But even after making such resolution either due to un-cautiousness or ignorance, if the perseverer (meditator) conjuncts his mind with any other object, then he should remove it soon and conjunct again with Ishwar. In the beginning new perseverer has to make efforts to disconnect his mind engrossed in other subjects and has to frequently conjunct it with God. After a sufficient time when he attains requisite discreet knowledge and practice, in the matter of mind, he can easily and surely disconnect his mind from the subjects he wants to disconnect and conjunct with the subjects, he wants to connect.

A lot of effort is made to keep the body healthy. Similarly, it is crucial to keep the mind healthy. Persons should aim to reach the Almighty and this can be achieved only when the battle of the mind is won.

The mind is fond of pleasures and thus it may love something or someone very much. However, the moment it comes across something better, it relinquishes the first and runs after the second. Winning over the mind, however, should not be confused with doing penance in a forest, or running away from the material world. That is mere escapism. By renouncing the world, we do not gain control over the mind. The more we suppress a thing, the more it revolts. The mind cannot be subdued with forcible discipline. Rather, every individual should study its nature and habits first.

Unless the mind finds something superior to worldly love, it is not ready, under any circumstances, to give up the pleasures of the world. But once a person gets a taste of the knowledge leading to God, he or she never turns to the material world again.

ज्योतिषां ज्योतिरेकं तन्मे मनः

"Jyotishaam Jyotirekam Tanme Manah"

(Yajurveda: 34.1)

means, "the mind is that illuminating-light by which all the senses are illuminated and act."

Mind is one of the eleven[22] principles of senses called 'internal principle of attention' and also known as 'Ubhayendriya'.

Mind is also called one of the four** 'reflecting medium' i.e. अन्तःकरण 'Antah-Karan'**.

**'Antah-Karan' consists of four things, such as 1. Mana i.e. mind or principle of attention, 2. Budhi i.e. Intellect or thought, 3. Chitta i.e. consciousness or memory and 4. Ahankara i.e. egoism or individuality.

"Mind" is an organ of thought and it is said that the mind is the king of all senses because all senses are under its control. Philosophically speaking the mind is actually, the messenger of intellect. It helps the principal senses to activate. To influence the principal senses is its work. Hence the intellect is knowledge-dominated whereas the mind is

work-dominated organ. Some time it seems that the mind decides of it's own, but it is a wrong concept. The principal senses (*Gyanendriyas and Karmendriyas*) are always in direct contact with the outside world and whatever knowledge they acquire passes them to the mind, and the mind then carries them to the brain. The brain then decides further actions and that decisions are delivered (ordered) to the senses concerned by the mind. The senses then act according to the decision (received by the mind). This whole process is so fast that it seems that everything happens automatically. The mind is the fastest messenger, even faster than the speed of light. But as written earlier, the mind works as a messenger of the intellect. One thing is to be noted here that the mind cannot have more than one knowledge at one time.

तदयौगपद्यालङ्गत्वच्च न मनसः।

"Tadayougapadyaalangatwacch Na Manasah"

(*Nyaaya Shastra* 2.24)

Hence it carries only one massage from or to the brain and senses. It works under brain and cannot do two works at one time. That is the attribute or characteristic of mind.

The mind cannot stay at a place, it always flickers like the pendulum of a clock, and hence it is very difficult to control the mind. But the one, who knows its characteristic (that only single knowledge remains in it at one time or you can say that mind cannot do two things at the same time), can easily have control over it. All senses are under mind's control and the mind itself is under brain's control whereas the brain is under self's (soul's) control. (Kathopanishada) Now, it becomes easy to control the mind. One (the self) has to decide what he wants to do, and give order to the brain and the same is conveyed to the mind. The body including all these organs like brain, mind and senses and etc. are insensate objects and hence cannot do anything by itself. With the influence of the soul all the means are seen to be live. The soul is the master of the body-like-chariot. One,

who is wise, always keeps his mind busy in some or the other work. Do not keep the mind idle. Keep it busy. When busy in some work it cannot think of other things. This is one of the ways (trick) to control the wandering/flickering mind.

The soul is the master in the body because he is a free agent and can control his brain while performing any action. "Know your body as a chariot and your soul as the master of that chariot. Know your intellect or reason as the charioteer (driver) and your mind as the reins." (*Kathopanishada:* 3.3)

[Information goes from Karmendriyas—Gyanendriyas—Mind—Intellect. The Intellect decides on the information collected by the mind with consultation of the soul and decision is conveyed to Intellect—Mind—Gyanendriyas—Karmendriyas.]

The mind flickers because of lack of Vairagya (renunciation) hence its concentration is essential. And with concentration mind is controlled and visualization of God is possible.

'Pranas' (nervauric forces of life) are the most valuable and important things in this human body. One can be alive without any sense organ but can never live for a moment without the vital forces i.e. nervauric forces i.e. 'Pranas'.

'Pranayamas' is one of the solution and very useful in controlling the mind. One who wants to control his mind has to exercise and practice 'Pranayamas'. Regulation of breath is the best solution. In this way one is controlling the mind as well as worshipping God.

Vibration and consciousness are inseparably one like the whiteness of snow, the oil in the sesame seed, the fragrance of the flower and the heat of fire. Their description as distinct categories is an error. Mind and movement of thought are inseparable; and the cessation of one is the cessation of both.

Sage Vasishta's precepts to Shri Ram —"O Rama! There are two ways in which this cessation (of vibration and consciousness) can be achieved. One is the way of Yoga, which involves the restraint of the movement of thought, and

the other is the way of knowledge, which involves the right knowledge of truth.

In this body, that energy which circulates in the energy-channels is known as *'Prana'*. In accordance with its diverse functions in the body, it is also known by the name 'Apaana'. This prana is indistinguishably united with the mind. In fact, the consciousness that tends towards thinking, on account of the movement of Prana, is known as the mind.

Movement of thought in the mind arises from the movement of prana; and movement of prana arises because of the movement of thought in consciousness. They thus form a cycle of mutual dependence of currents in water.

The wise ones declare that the movement of prana causes the mind; and hence by the restraint of the prana, the mind becomes quiescent. When the mind abandons the movement of thought, the appearance of the world-illusion ceases.

"The movement of prana is arrested at the moment when all hopes and desires come to an end in one's heart through the earnest practice of the precepts of the scriptures and sages, and by the cultivation of dispassion in previous life-span or through endeavouring to practice contemplation or meditation and reaching a stage of devotion to a single truth in a single-minded way." (*Yoga-Vasishta*)

In Hindi the mind is known as म+न 'Ma+na' and when you reverse it becomes न+म 'Na+ma' i.e. to be polite. If one, who wants to get control over his mind, just reverses it, meaning thereby that he learns to be polite in life, then the mind will be under your control.

मन इव मनुष्यानमि कारणं बन्ध मोक्षयोः

"Mana eva manushyaanami karanam bandh mokshayoh"

(Upanishad)

means one can attain salvation as well as bondage of birth and death because of the mind only.

* "The Brahma (God) is attainable by the mind (and not by physical senses). There is no plurality in Him, for He is

one. He who considers God as many (and not as one) goes from birth to death and does not attain salvation." (*Kathopanishada: 4.11*)

The mind can also be controlled by the worship of formless Omnipresent God, study of the Vedic literature, politeness, austerities, change of environments, company of the learned and poised people, listening religious-preaching, and trust in God. The most important thing to be observed is "Self-confidence". Without self-confidence nothing can be achieved in life.

[It is a vast subject to understand the 'Mind' properly so fearing limitation of time and space, it is difficult to express all the points here. One big book can be written on it. Only important information on this subject is expressed here.]

To fix the mind at one place and then continuous remembrance of God's nature-attributes-characteristics, for attainment of God, through Gayatri—mantras (or any other Vedic-mantra) or repeating His personal name ओ३म् "OM" and in that period not to think of anything else except God, is called "Meditation".

It is also called to be the act of listening to God. Where prayer is the act of talking to God, Meditation is not just for connecting to your soul, but is an excellent remedy for life's stress and confusion.

Goodness of Pure Meditation:

Reading the scriptures or listening to religious discourses does not make us better people. For improving our personality, health and perspective and also in the process of attaining self-realisation, we have to meditate. Meditation is purely a matter of experience. Reading about the method and procedure, meaning and scientific aspects and benefits of "Yoga" and " Meditation" from various sources does not help in actual meditation. That is only information; not knowledge. The information culled will prove to be useless unless it is applied to the practice of

meditation. So to be a meditator, one has to practice daily.

For the practice of yoga there is no need of giving up all worldly activity, family, friends, society, profession etc. All we have to do is to set apart some time everyday as part of the daily routine. It is not correct to think that spirituality and activity are incompatible. The Bhagavad Geeta advises us to perform action from our transcendental consciousness. So meditation and action are not opposites; rather, they go hand to hand. In ancient times meditation was considered one of the essential components of life. People would practice meditation as part of their daily routine. In today's context meditation assumes even greater relevance. For lasting peace, order, happiness and harmony in life, meditation is the best tonic and medication of all evils.

We are the only life forms in the universe who violate natural laws with impunity. Nature does not know how to pardon a violator. As a consequence, punishment is inevitable. This could be in the form of sickness and suffering, tension, stress, conflict, crime, terrorism, drought, flood, fire etc. We also violate national and international laws.

Keep peace and live in accordance with the natural law, we have to develop higher state of consciousness. What is consciousness? Consciousness is the essence of life. It is just like a sap for the tree. Every word that we speak and act that we perform, is an impulse of consciousness. Since consciousness is the most basic element of every one's life, knowledge of consciousness is the basic necessity of every one to exist and enjoy life to the full consciousness is within us. It is not outside of us. It is a permanent, un-manifested, un-bounded, infinite, self-referral state. It is the source and goal of all creation.

State of Meditation:

To experience qualities of consciousness, we have to practice "Yoga and Meditation". Meditation and Yoga are mental techniques to find inner silence (Peace). By

meditation, individual awareness blooms and experiences a unique state of restful alertness, in which the body becomes deeply relaxed and the mind transcends all mental activities and experiences absolute silence. In meditation, the mind and the intellect have no work. It is a state of no-mind, no-identification of oneself. It is a world of peace, bliss and happiness.

The great sage Mahar'shi Patanjali, the father of Yoga, has given a scientific basis to Yoga. According to him, Yoga, is not a therapy, it is a discipline. A discipline is needed even when you are in good health. Today, we are increasingly turning to alternative medicine. As a result, practice of Yoga has become limited to a few persons. Yoga can be practiced by anyone irrespective of age, caste, community, religion, faith or belief. Yoga is not a temporal practice, it is a life long process. The Yoga-sutra has clearly stated that Yoga must be practiced consistently with complete devotion, perseverance and regularity.

To make Yoga accessible to everyone whether he or she is a homemaker, office goer, student, factory worker or an agriculturist, Yoga should be viewed as being independent of an ascetic lifestyle. One can enjoy the bliss and peace of meditation without having to adopt an ascetic way of life. In any case, spiritual life is not restricted to the confines of monasteries, hermitages of ashrams.

Today, we are always short of time. We talk of 'sparing' some time for important activities. As meditation is a valuable activity, proven by science, complaining about lack of time is irrelevant. Yoga can help find the solution to every problem because it helps us to develop a higher state of consciousness.

Benefits from Meditation:

To meditate God's name or to think of his name shows that we want something from him. Man is of selfish nature and no one remembers anyone without a reason. There ought to be some cause. There is no use meditating if there is no gain

from it. There are very important, interesting and inquisitive reasons to be understood by all our religious readers.

Firstly: If one is to meditate God i.e. to meditate on His name, he must have to know God's personal/original name by which he is going to meditate.

Secondly: Some meditate on God either when he/she is in trouble and wants to get rid of it or when he/she wants some help and inspiration from him. There are very few people who love Him and want His bliss and to express their gratefulness, because He is the only One who listens to all.

यस्य नाम महद्यशः

"Yasya Naama Mahadyashah." (Yajurveda: 32.3)
which means "God is great because He does all good things for us." It is a duty of every human being to adopt His attributes, nature and characteristics.

We must understand one thing clearly that is the personal and original name of Omnipresent God. God is called by hundred different names (such as "Parmatma, Ishwara, Prabhu, Brahma, Vishnu, Mahesh, Ganapati, Shiva, Shankara, GOD, Khuda, Khoda, Allah" etc.) by virtue of possessing manifold nature, attributes and characteristics. But His personal name according to the Vedas and Vedic literature is said to be "AUM", pronounced as "OM", because in the Veda God has declared His personal name as "OM". Here are some proofs—

ओ३म् खं ब्रह्म

"OM Kham Brahama" (Yajurveda 40.17)
i.e. God is above all whose name is "OM".

ओ३म् क्रतो स्मर

"OM Krato Smara" (Yajurveda 40.15)
means O man always remember God whose personal original name is "OM".

* The Holy Quran says: **"Asharaful Makhlooquat"** means "Man is the best in this Universe." So it our duty to

remember God to express our gratitude towards Him.

You must have observed that if one does a little favour for someone else, he thanks him many a time. God has given everything to us, then why not thank Him? Because of Him we exist. Because of Him we are lucky to see our father, mother, brothers, sisters etc. We should always thank Him by obeying His Commandments. One should perform prayer and worship Him with full faith and love, not with fear. By worshipping Him one acquires the attributes of God. God is blissful so with communion one becomes blissful. Whoever is in contact with Him gets His bliss. God is everywhere but because of his ignorance, man cannot experience His bliss. Surrender to Him and see what happens. Remember one thing that God loves those who love Him. God sees those who see to Him.

God does not become happy or feels sad when one does or does not remember Him. It is we who remain separated from His Bliss and Blessings. God is not affected if we remember Him or not.

"Let a man, therefore, try to acquire His virtues (i.e. to be like God in nature and attributes etc.).Thus let him be great by the performance of great works, let him be powerful among the powerful, let him augment his power, let him never commit a sinful act. Let him be kind to all. Let him perfect his means of progress. Let him develop technical arts and with their help, make different kinds of things. Let him do unto others as he would be done by. Let him protect all. Let him be learned amongst the learned. Let him diligently punish the wicked and protect the good. In short molding one's nature, attributes and character in accordance with those of God alone constitutes the true method of taking His name." *[Light Of Truth XI]*

यस्य नाम महद्यशः

"Yasya Naama Mahadyashah" *(Yajur Veda 32.3)*

i.e. "Taking the name of the Great God consists in performing great works of righteousness."

Some Important Things:

One should meditate (Dhyana) early in the morning between 3.30 and 6 A.M. (these 2.30 hours are called Brahma Muhurt i.e. meditation time for God) and in the evening between 5.00 and 7.30 p.m.; because at these particular times (at sunrise and sunset) the environment remains calm, pure and pleasant. One should take a bath and wear loose clothes so that he can sit comfortably. One should sit in a straight position (posture) on the ground, which should be plain, so that it will not disturb him during meditation. Yoga Mudra is the best position. Face must be in the direction from which air comes freely. Close your eyes, do atleast three or more "Pranayamas" (breathing exercises to control mind) and chant God's name (OM) with its meaning with a pleasant and fresh mind. In this way repeat "OM" slowly and at the same time try to feel happiness. God is formless, all-pervading and resides within you in your heart. God is the Lord of all. He is Omnipotent, Omnipresent and Omniscient. He is our Father, Mother, Sister, Brother, Teacher etc. He is just and merciful. God is within us. He listens everything what we repeat in our mind. Try to visualise Him, according to His attributes, nature and characteristics and feel His presence outside and inside you. He knows you and your feelings. Always remember God's Greatness and His attributes, in this way one becomes pure and his deeds become good.

"In short moulding one's nature, attributes and character in accordance with those of God alone constitutes the true method of taking His name." At the time of death only these righteous deeds i.e. "Dharma" (righteousness) go with the soul and that is only the achievement of human life.

The repetition of God's name without its meaning with closed eyes does not make any sense or gain. This is only a waste of precious time. Once time gone will not come back, so one should learn the correct method of meditation.

By meditation i.e. repetition of God's personal and original name ओ३म् "OM" man experiences the bliss of God

that cannot be described or expressed in words. One cannot even know how time has passed; where he is sitting; how he is sitting etc. God's bliss is the real gain i.e. *"Meditation"*.

There should be a system or code of conduct to be followed by man to remember God's name. It is good to have some time fixed for meditation. संध्या *"Sandhya"* is the best time for meditation. Sandhya is the time when day and night meet i.e. early in the morning and late in the evening; more commonly known as sunrise and sunset or dusk and dawn. At this time i.e. during morning before sunrise and before sunset in the evening, the air is richer with oxygen in the atmosphere that gives energy to our nervauric forces (Prana Shakti) which help in meditation.

The time from 3.30 to 6 A.M. is called ब्रह्म मुहूर्त "Brahma Muhurata". At this time air contains the maximum quantity of pure oxygen, which is healthier for us to breathe. Moreover, mind also remains fresh, calm, cool and pure, hence this is the best time for meditation. There is a scientific reason also to this theory.

Scientific facts about Meditation:

To understand better here we explain the scientific theory as follows—

We take in oxygen (O_2) and give out carbon dioxide (CO_2) when we breathe. The oxygen helps in metabolism of food and gives us energy for all the vital activities. This whole process is called respiration. Carbon dioxide is formed during metabolism. It is given out, accumulation of CO_2 in the body leads to fatigue and yawning.

Plants also respire at night. During the day plants perform the process of Photosynthesis i.e. they make their own food from CO_2 and water in the presence of sunlight and chlorophyll. During this process Oxygen is released.

Photosynthesis:

$6CO_2$ + $6H_2O$ Sunlight ($C_6H_{12}O_6$ + $6O_2$ (Carbon-dioxide)+ (Water Chlorophyll)—((Food) + (Oxygen)

(*Chlorophyll =Pigment which gives green colour to the plants)

[The rate of photosynthesis is maximum in the mornings and evenings-when there is a red glow in the sky (Red Effect (Rate of photosynthesis is maximum in red light). During the stomata (process for gas exchange present in the leaves) close to prevent excessive loss of water by the process of transpiration. (Plants lose water in the form of water vapour from the stomata. This process is called transpiration.]

Thus, the air is richer with oxygen during morning and before sunset in the evening. This pure air is healthier for us to breathe, hence meditations at these times are recommended in the Vedic philosophy.

Besides this, one should always take God's name, whenever he gets time. Even when we are doing some work, in the office, while travelling by bus, train or plane, anywhere when we are free we must remember God. With this practice (to remember God's name) one is free from entangles of worldly problems and remains balanced in pain and pleasure. Death becomes easy and there will be no fear of death for those who always take God's name.

Preparation for Meditation:

One must find a comfortable seating place (Aasana) where there is a flow of fresh air. It is important that your back (Spinal cord) be kept straight. Gently close your eyes. Start Pranayam and begin to focus on your breathing. Watch inwardly as your chest expands and collapses with the flow of air. Now increase the intake of air to fill the belly. Keep breathing in until the belly is extended with air, and then continue to bring the air on up to the top of the throat, if possible. Only push your comfort zone slightly. Now hold you breath for the count of 1. 2. 3. 4. 5 (you can increase the counts according to your capacity after some days), then exhale gently, slowly, sinking inward as you do so. Again, breathe deeply, extending the abdomen with air, extending

the belly and then bringing the air on up as high as you can...Hold for the count of three.... Now exhale slowly, gently, feeling yourself relaxed, let go, and begin to find that quiet, peaceful place inside. Once more, take deep breath, extending the abdomen, bringing it up into the chest, hold it, and start counting from 1 to 10. Now exhale slowly, softly, feeling yourself become peaceful and relaxed. Repeat this procedure for atleast three to five times. Now focus on the energy you are experiencing. Notice how brilliant it appears! Now begin. Take a moment to feel the warmth, the strength, and comfort that this. Allow yourself to float in this safe and peaceful place. Just float, relaxing, breathing, and RESTING. Feel that you are fully safe here. Now bring your consciousness back to the present. Watch yourself in correct posture from inside (without opening your eyes) and feel fully comfortable by adjusting once again.

Now you are ready for Dhyana and your eyes are closed. Do feel that "I am away from all wordily things. My thoughts are free from everything (all evils) and I am trying to visualize Omnipotent God. I am sitting in the lap of Omnipresent God who is my Adorable Father, Mother, Brother, Friend. I am not alone. He is always with me. He is my guardian and I am not afraid of anything. I am pure soul and my supreme Father is the Purest. Today I am going to meet Him and talk to Him freely.

(My eyes are closed and it's very dark here. I cannot see anything. It's blank. But I'll find my God anyhow! Yes! I know that God is Formless, Omniscient, Omnipotent and Just, then why not He adores me? I adore Him, He has to adore me. I am very much confident, today I'll meet Him.)

In this way one must be ready to visualise God. One thing is to be borne in mind that God is not a thing to be visualised because. He is All-conscious entity. God is formless. He is visualised (felt) by the soul who is also a formless conscious entity.

Again and again one has to practise to meet God. The procedure of this technique is called "Dhyana or

Meditation".

Once again the same practice but in a different method. Now we worship God by chanting His personal and most adorable popular name which is nothing but "OM". God is all-blissful and we want His bliss to become like Him.

Close your eyes and see the deep darkness (It is obvious that when eyes are fully closed and one can not see anything but very deep darkness) and repeat the following words in your clean mind with pure love and dedication: "OOOO....MM Aanandah" and repeat the meaning "O God! You are All Blissful, Kindly make us blissful too". Repeat these words again and again and feel that God is near you and of course, He listens what you say with your inner voice. Feel that He is supplying His bliss to you. And after practicing this technique (Yoga) you will really feel something soothing and energetic in you. You will feel peace of mind — a real Divine Peace — love in your heart and compassion in your eyes. Yes! This is Anand (Bliss of God). Now slowly wiggling your fingers and toes, rub your palms to get warmth and touch them on your eyes and very slowly rub them. Now open your eyes slowly. Now you are fully back in the present and relaxed.

This is not a hard and fast rule that one should or must say the same thing or utter the same words, but it is must that his intention should be pure and devotional. Take any Vedic-Mantra for meditating God. The purpose of meditation is to create inner-peace and to experience bliss. **The Gayatri Mantra** is said to be the most beneficial and adorable mantra for meditation of God, because this mantra is said to be full in the sense that it contains Stuti-Prarthana-Upasana i.e. Glorification-Prayer-Communion of God. One can chant the Gayatri mantra and its meaning very slowly in mind and enjoy God's presence in his heart. Gayatri mantra is for everyone. Yes! For everyone! Take any mantra from the Veda, which you can understand and chant properly with correct pronunciation. It is true that chanting of the Vedic hymns in praise of God is a sure way of stabilising

the mind. The Simran or remembrance of that eternal God's name, which is already present in our inner-self, can be done neither with tongue nor with the lips. That holy name is inexpressible and hence beyond any language. The Simran of this holy name makes us pure, takes us on the path of true Bhakti and salvation. The words made by man cannot be called mantra. It must be borne in mind that "The verses only from the Holy Vedas are called the mantras."

Now you are a different person. You feel a different personality in you. Even others will comment on you that you have changed a lot. This is Meditation!

Kapil Muni, the author of the Sankhya Darshana has defined the term "Dhyaana or Meditation" as "the state of mind when remains objectivitated i.e. without any thought (when the mind is away from worldly objects), is called the "Dhyaana or Meditation". If there are thoughts in the mind, meditation does not take place. When there is an idol, one is forced to think about its existence, colors, eyes, clothes etc., so the mind will be busy thinking every aspect of the idol and roam in its attributes.

"God being Formless and Omnipresent cannot have an image. If the sight of an idol puts God in one's mind, why cannot this wonderful creation which comprehends the earth, water, fire, air and vegetation and a hundred and one other things? Can one think of God when he looks at the earth and the mountains that are wonderfully constructed. It is altogether wrong to say that sight of an idol makes one think of God. This would mean that when the idol is out of sight, the devotee would not think of God and, consequently when all alone, may succumb to the temptation of committing theft, adultery and the like sins. Believing as he does that there is no one to witness his actions, he would not scruple to commit the most degrading sins. These are some of the evils that result from the worship of idols. Now mark the difference! He, who has no faith in idols and believes that God is Omnipresent, Omniscient and Just and God pervades the whole Universe then he cannot even harbour

evil thoughts in his mind—leave alone committing sins, because he knows that God witnesses all actions—good or bad—and that he is never away from Him even for a moment. He is fully aware of the fact that if he committed a sin—in word, deed or thought—Just Providence cannot but punish him.

Merely talking of God is of no use, even as the repetition of the word sugar does not give a sweet taste to the mouth, nor does the repetition of the word Neem *(Melia azadiracta)* imparts a bitter taste to the palate. The sensations of sweetness and bitterness are produced only when sweet and bitter substances are brought in contact with the tongue." *(Light Of Truth -XI)*

"Concentration of mind on a material object is impossible, for it can grasp it at once and after mastering all the details wanders over fresh objects. On the other hand, in the case of Immaterial, Infinite God, do what it will; the mind will never be able to comprehend Him. God being invisible, the mind cannot seer it, it contemplates His nature, attributes, characteristics and being beautified is perfectly focussed. Had it been possible to concentrate the mind on a material object, all the people of the world would have been able to concentrate their minds, because it remains engrossed in worldly objects such as other minds, one's wife, children and friends and wealth, but no one can concentrate his mind except on an abstract being, because He is Invisible, Hence idol worship is a sin." (*Light Of Truth* XI).

To meditate on God, one has to keep in mind, some of the attributes of God and enjoy His bliss, so idol is not necessary for meditation. There is no picture of hunger, thirst, pain, pleasure, love etc and no one can shoot their photographs or draw their pictures on paper. These can be experienced by the mind and felt by the intellect, but cannot be described in words.

God is a conscious entity and subject of a conscious entity that is soul. God is all pervading, hence exists within

the soul. God resides in the hearts of human soul hence one has to search His presence within him only. To go within, one is not hurdled by any outside objects.

Benefits of Meditation:

Believe or not, it does not affect God at all, on the contrary; it is man (the soul) who is to benefit by meditating on God.

Man is a selfish creature by nature, wherever he sees gain, he acts accordingly. (One can cheat his friends for small things, can cheat anyone for receiving a higher position in a society, can also kill his own-consciousness for his popularity in religious society, but mind you, God is Omnipresent and Omniscient. You cannot cheat Him. Meditation helps those who help themselves by doing virtuous things.) On the other hand, God is perfect and complete, so he wants to provide help to all living-beings. Man is the best creature, He is knowledgeable, can think, imagine and work, he knows what is good and bad according to his knowledge. He wants improvements, developments, so he has to obey, he has to believe who is more knowledgeable and intellectual than he is. (Then who is He? He is God—No one else).

In this world there is more pleasure than pain. Man wants only pleasure and tries to get rid of all kinds of pain. Worldly pleasure in the end result of pain because pain is hidden in the pleasure. Bliss is a natural attribute of God.

Those who are near to Him acquire His attribute and become like Him, become blissful. [The soul never dissolve in God, so how can the soul enjoy God's Bliss?] As you all know that fire gives heat and ice gives coolness to one who is very near to them. That means one gets the attributes of the thing that is very near to him. If man wants the bliss of God (the inner happiness) he has to renounce the matter i.e. worldly imperishable, dead, inert, insensate objects. God is full of virtuous nature, attributes and characteristics, hence to acquire His Bliss and Blessings, one has to come nearer to

Him, worship Him, be in communion with Him.

Now one has to decide —what he wants? Does he want to believe in God or not? If man wants to get rid of all pains and sorrows in the world and wants to free himself from the bondage of birth and death, he has to take shelter of the Almighty GOD. He has to practise Yoga—the act of communion with God.

Some Important and Useful Tips for prayer and meditation:

1. It is always better for a meditator to have his own Aasana (seat) and a specified particular fixed place for his daily prayer and meditation.
2. The floor, ground or platform, where the devotee sits for prayer or meditation, should be flat and even, otherwise, it would not be possible for him/her to sit in the right and correct posture.
3. The sitting posture should remain unchangeable throughout.
4. The eyes and mouth should also remain gently closed, when the devotee is having reflection, concentration, meditation and communion with God. Here the recitation of Mantras should be mental with the core of heart.
5. Sheer propensity to complete the prayer and meditation routine as quickly as possible or, exhibitive tendencies of showing and boasting of prayer and medication exercises should be completely avoided.
6. During the coarse of prayer and meditation, if it becomes unavoidable, for some reason or other, to have a break, or to change the posture; then, after irritant factor is over, the whole prayer process should be repeated again, right from the beginning.
7. In mass prayer, the chorus recitation of Mantras should be with proper accent and rhythm.

Practical Meditation : a view

To be unconscious of your actions, your thoughts, your feelings creates your dark night of the soul. The moment you are aware of all these three layers of your being..... Thought is the most superficial, feeling, a little deeper, and then being—the last thing that you have to lose into the ultimate.

The process is simple, the process is the same.

Watch, witness, observe your thoughts—without any judgement, without any condemnation or evaluation..... Because the moment you make any judgment for or against, you are no longer a witness; you have already become part of the thought process. Remain silent, and just see whatsover is passing on the screen of your mind, the way you see a film. Just remember that you are only a seer.

And the same process when you have succeeded on the first layer will make you capable of seeing your feelings which are more subtle. But the person who can see thoughts and remains silently a witness automatically becomes capable of the second step. Soon you will be able to see your feelings, sentiments, moods, emotions.

Once you are beyond the second, then the third....it is the deepest in you, the feeling of "I", the separation of you from the universe. Actually you are not separated for a single moment, you cannot exist in separation. You are in tune in every possible way. There are thousands of bridges between you and the existence around you.

Now watch this silence, this is-ness, this feeling of am-ness; simply watch. There is nothing else to watch, just a small boundary around you.

As you watch feelings, feelings disappear.

As you watch being, you are no longer separate.

Only the witness remains, which is your eternal reality. And it has nothing to do with you; it is universal.

Your witness and my witness are not separate.

Wherever witnessing happens, it is the same.

It knows no distance in space and no distance in time. For the witness there is no space and no time; it has no

limits. Before you arrive at this point, all else is the dark night of the soul.

Your arrival at this witnessing starts the beautiful day of the soul.

It is a sunrise which never sets.

But just listening to me will not help. You will have to practise this as much as possible. And it needs no separate time—that you have to sit for one hour, or twenty minutes, and witness. If you have time you can sit silently and witness, but there is no necessity. You can go on doing your work and still be witnessing.

The whole thing is how to make your witness stronger and stronger, so that it is capable of losing all identities. Only a strong person can lose all identities.

And to be in utter silence....there is light, a light that never began and never ends. And it is yours just to claim. And the effort is not so difficult as religions have been telling you.

Walking on the road, what is the problem? Why can't you simply watch your walking? The question is not of the object that you witness, the question is that you witness. Anything helps to strengthen your witnessing energies.

Looking at a beautiful sunset, don't just get lost, don't forget yourself. Remember that you are only a seer. It can go on twenty-four hours a day without anybody knowing that you are doing something. Religion is not something that the world has to know about. It is something that you have to do within yourselves.

Start from this very moment.

This immense silence—thousands of people, but it is as if there is no one...just witness. The faraway sound of an aeroplane..... You remain only a witness.

And then go on practising the same thing whatever you are doing—eating, taking a shower, doing some work in the garden, in the field. It does not matter what you do, what matters is that your witness is always present.

In the beginning you will forget many times, because for many lives you have never been a witness, you have always been a doer. So it is just an old habit. Old habits die hard, but they certainly die.

And it all depends on you. The more you make it a process almost like breathing.... You go on doing everything, still you are breathing. You don't stop your breathing because you are digging a hole in the earth.

Witnessing has to become just like breathing.

It in fact is the breathing of the universal soul in you.

And once you have tasted just a moment of being universal, the morning has come. The dark night of the soul is over.

(Courtesy : Death to Deathlessness)

Yajna : its importance

Yajna is a feeling, a selfless action:

Definition of Yajna: 1: Respect of the learned, 2: Proper use of physical sciences, 3: To impart knowledge and good deeds, and 4: To perform Agnihotra by which all creatures are benefitted through the process of purification of air, rain, medicines etc.

"Yajna: Beginning from Agnihotra (the fire-ritual) unto Ashvamedha or the material transaction and physical science that are used for the welfare for the universe is called Yajna." (*Aryoddeshyaratnamala. 47)*

Yajna can be pronounced as Yajna or Yagya. There are many more words for "Yajna" in the Vedic literature such as: Yajnah, Venah, Adhvah, Meghah, Vidathah, Narthah, Savanam, Hotrah, Ishtihi, Devataata, Makhah, Vishnuhu, Indrah, Prajapatihi, and Dharmah. *(Nighantu: 3/1)*.

In the four Vedas the term "Yajna" has been described 1184 times, in Rigveda 580 times, in Yajurveda 243 times, in Samaveda 63 times and in Atharvaveda the word 'Yajna' has come 298 times. It is said

यज्ञौ वै श्रेष्ठत्तमं कर्म:

"Yajyo Vai Shreshthatamam Karmah"

(Shatpath Brahmana: 1.7.3.5)

which means the Yajna to perform is the best Krama.

According to Vedic theories and ancient tradition, Yajna is a sacred ritual to be performed by all humans, irrespective of caste, creed, colour, sects, beliefs and etc. Now-a-days it is performed in different forms in almost all religions, sections and communities all over the world. Burning of candles in Christian Churches, lamps in Hindu

Mandir, Lobaan, Agarbattis, incense etc. in many sacred places etc. in religious congregations clearly shows the continuation of Yajna ritual.

All these rituals are performed with the intention of achieving happiness through health, wealth, peace, strength, fame and protection from natural calamities, diseases, and all unforeseen events. All desires are fulfilled with "Yajna" hence the Vedas and other A'rsha Granthas lay emphasis on Yajna.

The word Yajna is derived from the root 'Yaj' which means to add or to combine. It is clear that the Yajna combines the self with the Supreme Soul God. Yajna is said to be the combination of three things देव पूजा, संगतिकरण और दान i.e. Dev-Pooja, Sangati-Karan and Daan.

1. देव पूजा Dev-Pooja—means worship of Chetan (living) and insensate (Jada) deities. Devas or Devtas are those who possess divine and noble virtues such as God, virtuous noble persons and Mother Nature. There are two types of devas, 1. living deities and 2. Jada or insensate e.g. Earth, Water, Fire, Air and Ether. In other words Dev-Pooja is to respect elders [Father, Mother, Teachers, Learned persons, guests etc., to obey and respect them accordingly.], to learn from them, and to perform Agnihotra (fire rituals) to make pollution free atmosphere. In short to adopt the attributes of living devtas and make insensate deities healthy and pure is called "Dev-Pooja". The greatest Deva or Mahaadeva is ONLY GOD to whom worship is due.

2. संगति Sangati—Karan—is to have company of virtuous people as well as mixing or joining two or more useful object and beings etc. Moreover to make friendship and love with the same age group, by this there will be no enmity.

3. दान Daan*—i.e. Charity means making sacrifice for the good of others without self-interest. This is the best solution to get rid of the greatest evil of man i.e. ego. "Daan" is a must for all humans because it is the gateway towards God's kingdom. The learned can give charity of

knowledge and education, the brave and strong can give charity of fearlessness to weak persons, and the wealthy can sacrifice money for the poor people and for any good cause. The rest can sacrifice their services to the needy people i.e. to help and give protection to younger ones. To give them shelter and look after them. To give them proper knowledge and guide them in the right direction.

***Daan and Donor:** Yajna is the greatest and best action/deed/work in the world. It is an important and essential duty of the Yajmaanas to give Dakshina to Purohit or Brahman who performs Yajna, as a token of respect. But it's misunderstood by many of the Yajmaanas that they have to give money, as alms/charity to Brahaman is not correct. Brahma's main role in the Yajna is to watch and give advice for correction if anything goes wrong in the proceedings of the Yajna.

ब्रह्मा तु वदति जातविद्याम्

"Brahamaa Tu Vadati Jaatavidyam"

(Rigveda: 10.71.11)

According to this Rigveda Mantra: There are four names of the persons who look after the essential duties of performing the ritual related to Yajna. They are Hotaa, Udgaataa, Brahama, and Adharyu. If any one of them is missing means the Yajna is not perfect or complete. As stated earlier it is the essential duty and responsibility of the Yajmaanas to give donation (in cash or kind) to these four virtuous persons. This donation or contribution is called "Dakshina" not "Daan". दान और दक्षिणा Daan and Dakshina both have their different meanings. Daan is to be given to younger, weak and poor one whereas Dakshina is offering to some respected, elderly, virtuous, suitable and worthy persons. In short Daan and Dakshina should be given to *Su-Paatras* i.e. worthy and respectable recipient and not to *Ku-Paatras* i.e. incapable and undeserving recipient.). There is no use in giving out donations if the intention is to simply gain popularity, it will not add up to any good or virtuous

deed. Donation (alms or charity) is given away willingly and cannot be demanded. In case of National calamities. Government and other organizations can ask for donation from the public which is acceptable, but to demand donation in the name of performing Yajna, is undeserving for the Brahma. It's an insult to Yajna and Yajmaanas.

The Vedas teach:—

सहस्त्रं व्यतीनां युक्तानामिन्द्रमीमहे।
शतं सोमस्य खार्यः ॥

"He, who demands more gets a little and he who demands nothing gets more." (Rigveda: 4-32-17)

"There are three kinds of donors—Best, middle and lowest. The best donor is he who takes time, place, and worthiness of the recipient into consideration before he gives charity and does it for the purpose of furthering the cause of enlightenment, righteousness and public good. The donor of middle kind is one who gives charity for the love of fame or some other selfish gain. Whilst the donor of the lowest kind is one who does not do anything for his own good or for that of others, but simply wastes his money on prostitutes, makes no distinction between a worthy and an unworthy recipient and gives alms to all like the shopkeeper in the proverb who sold all kinds of food-stuffs at the rate of nine stones a rupee, inflicts sufferings on the good and the righteous to benefit himself. In other words, he who honours those about whom he makes himself sure, after a thorough inquiry, that they are good, learned and righteous men is the best kind of donor, whilst he, who may or may not care to inquire whether a person is a worthy recipient or not but bestows gifts for gaining public applause, is the middle kind of donor; but he who grants blindly without making an inquiry into the worthiness or unworthiness of recipient is indeed the lowest kind of donor." (*Light of Truth:* Chapter # 11)

Naturally one question must have arisen in the minds of our learned and inquisitive readers that "How to distinguish between a worthy recipient and an unworthy recipient?" For

this Mahr'shi says:

"Whosoever is deceitful, hypocritical, selfish, sensual, lustful, wrathful, avaricious and subject to infatuation, injures others, is greedy untruthful and devoid of learning, associates with bad people, is lazy, repeatedly begs for alms from the same donor, compels a person to give alms by sitting at his door and causing him annoyance, does not take a refusal and keeps on begging, is never contented, reviles, curses or abuses those who do not give him anything in charity, turns into an enemy of one who has refused him alms once, though he has always helped him before, is a wolf in sheep's skin, misleads others and cheats them, pleads poverty even when he has plenty, serves his selfish purpose by coaxing and cajoling others, is engaged in begging day and night, when invited to a dinner stimulates his appetite by the use of intoxicants such as Cannabis Indica and eats in excess at the expense of others, and then gets intoxicated and neglects his duties, opposes the path of righteousness and follows that of unrighteousness to gain his selfish ends, teaches his disciples to respect and serve him alone, never other good and learned men who are worthy of respect, opposes the dissemination of light and knowledge, brings about discord in one's relationship towards his wife and husband, father, mother, children, friends, king and fellow subjects by teaching falsely that all these relations are unreal and the world is also an illusion, is an unworthy recipient.

While he who leads a chaste life keeps his senses under thorough control, studies and teaches the Vedas and the Vedic books. Is gentle, truthful, loves to promote public good, is of active habits, generous, helps to disseminate knowledge and righteousness, is virtuous, keeps an even mind, is not influenced by praise or censure, is fearless, full of courage and hope, is a yogi, is enlightened, acts in accordance with the laws of nature, the teachings of the Vedas and Nature, attributes and characteristics of God, preaches truth justly, without favour or fear. Examines scholars of the Vedas and other Shastras, flatters none,

answers questions to the satisfaction of his questioners, loves others like his own-self, is free from ignorance, obstinacy, prejudice and conceit, and regards the censure of the world as nectar and public praise as poison. Even when compelled to beg for alms in time of emergency and is refused does not feel hurt nor speaks ill of him who did not give him alms and leaves that place atonce. Is contented with whatever one gives him through love, is friendly towards the happy, kind to those who are in trouble, pleased with the righteous and indifferent towards the sinful, in other words free from inordinate love or malice. He is truthful in word, deed and thought, free from hypocrisy, jealously and malevolence is a man of high ideals, is highly virtuous and altogether free from any vice. He is devoted to the promotion of public good with all his heart and with all his soul, even sacrifices his life for the happiness of others, and is possessed of such other excellent qualities, is verily a worthy recipient. But in time of famine and want all living creatures can be considered as entitled to get food, water, clothes, medicines and other necessaries of life.

(Mahr'shi Dayananda Saraswati--"Light Of truth" Chapter # 11)

Yajna: It is a system of three kinds:

1. नैतिक यज्ञ *Naityika Yajna*—These are Brahama Yajna (Sandhya), Deva Yajna (Agnihotra), Pitri Yajna, Atithi Yajna and Balivaishwadev Yajna. These are obligatory and are to be performed everyday. Every household should compulsorily perform them. They are also called "Dainik Agnihotra".

2. नैमित्तिक यज्ञ *Naimittika Yajna*—The Yajnas are performed to advert natural calamities such as excess of rain and drought etc.

3. काम्य यज्ञ *Kaamya Yajna*—The Yajna is performed for the fulfillment of certain desires, such as Putreshtee Yajna (The Yajna is performed to get the son).

In fact Yajna is not merely a ritual, but it is a complete way of life. The spirit of rising over and above self- interest

to make voluntary sacrifice for the good of the human masses and of all animate beings, and to obtain individual well-being through the good and well-being of all. This tendency develops co-operation and avoids confrontation of capitalism. This way of life will always encourage and result in acts of Dharma only.

There are hundreds of mantras in the Vedas, which describe performing of Yajna, which is the best deed for man on earth. The Yajurveda is full of mantras about Yajna i.e. what, when, why and how to perform Yajna. "The Yajurveda is the Veda of Karma-kaanda" i.e. what are essential duties of a noble man and what actions are to be avoided by man, all these things are described in the Yajurveda.

Deva-Pooja, Sangati-Karan and Daan balance the life of a man. Homa or Agnihotra (fire rituals which is performed daily) is the materialistic symbol of Yajna, which purifies the environment, hence health is improved. Whatever substances are put in the fire (fire of Yajna) maximizes the attributes of that Substance and the air spreads it in to the atmosphere. There are many advantages of Agnihotra. Yajna is beneficial for all living-beings, because whatever is put in the holy fire (Yajna), the fire returns the same in manifold to the air, air returns it to the clouds which also does the same thing i.e. clouds give it back to the earth by way of rain. What man had sacrificed in fire, the same is returned to him in manifold by way of Yajna. Yajna also controls pollution. Food, vegetables, herbal is enriched and purified, hence performance of "Yajna" is essential and the best deed for man in the world.

Yajna is good for all, by performing "Homa" the society is benefitted and enjoys a pleasant life [Of course we also are the members of society]. All living beings gain from Yajna. Pain, sorrows, unhappiness, miseries, all kind of diseases and tensions are gone by performing the best deed for man i.e. "Yajna". Yajna or Havan[1] is to purify the atmosphere and the

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1. Havan can be defined as Agnihotra or Homa that are performed daily as religious ritual. Of course! It is Deva-Pooja. Yajya is the

mind of the performer and those who join in it. It serves to elevate the human mind by enabling it to bless, praise and adore the divine giver of life and happiness.

The fire in the Yajna means a lot too. If valuables are burned then the fire symbolizes human welfare. Havan-Samagri and other odoriferous ingredients alongwith pure ghee are burned then the fire disseminates the essential oils in the atmosphere when these scents are inhaled, the fumes seek the tissues of the body, which is beneficial to the body. The central and overall meaning of the Yajna involves sacrifice and co-operation with others to achieve desired goals. The spirit for sacrifice and sharing is at the core of Yajna.

Yajna (Homa or Agnihotra) —it is a worship of Jada deities' i.e. insensate objects or dead inert matters so in that way nature's balance is maintained. By this method of scarification we also earn to give and donate. Recitation of all mantras of Agnihotra ends in इदन्न मम् *"Idam Na Mama"*, which means, "It is not mine". In this way egoism does not develop in the mind of man who performs Yajna, hence attributes of individuality (Ahankara) is perished.

All living beings gain from the Yajna. Pain, sorrows, unhappiness, miseries, all kind of diseases and tensions are gone by performing the best deed for man i.e. "Yajna". Yajna or Havan is to purify the atmosphere and the mind of the performer and those who join in it. It serves to elevate the human mind by enabling it to bless, praise and adore the divine giver of life and happiness.

* The Veda says—"He who wants blissful life (heaven) must perform Yajna".

The Yajna or Yagya are as old (ancient) as the Vedas.

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combination of Deva-Pooja, Sangati-Karan and Daan. Offering oblations in the ritual fire with chanting of the Vedic mantra is Havan (Agnihotra or Homa) not Yajya. When Sangati-Karan and Daan is there, then only it is called Yajya.

The Rigveda is the first Veda, in which the very first mantra says:—

अग्निमीके पुरोहितं यज्ञस्य देवमृत्विजम्।
होतारं रत्नधातमम्॥

"Agni Meede Purohitam Yajnasya Devamritvijam, Hotaaram Ratna Dhaatamam." (Rigveda 1-1-1-1)

In this very first mantra of the Veda it is clearly described the words "Yajna", "Purohit", "Ritvij" and "Hotaa", hence it clear that Yajna is to be performed in the guidance of Purohits - Ritvij - Hotaa, hence Yajnas are as ancient as the Veda itself.

अरं कृण्वन्तु वेदिं समग्निमिन्धातां पुरः।
तत्रामृतस्य चेतनं यज्ञं ते तनवावहै॥

"Aram Krinvantu vedim Samagnimindhataam Purah"

(Rigveda 1-170-4)

means it is a commandment of the Supreme Soul that "Decorate the Yajna-Vedi i.e. your places where Yajna is performed, and do lit the sacred fire in it and raise it.

आ वक्षि देवाँ इह विप्र यक्षि चोशन्होतर्निषदा योनिषु त्रिषु

"Aa Vakshi Devaam Iha Vipra Yakshi Cha"

(Rigveda 2-36-4)

means O learned man! Invite the Gods and perform Yajna i.e. sacred fire.

जुहोता प्रा च तिष्ठाता

"Juhota Pra Cha Tishthata" (Rigveda 1-15-9)

means it is a God's order to perform Yajna and develop.

प्र यज्ञमन्मा वृजनं तिराते

"Pra Yajnamanmaa Vrijanam Tiraate"

(Rigveda 7-61-4)

means performing sacred Yajna solves all problems of life.

यज्ञो हि त इन्द्र वर्धनो भूदुत प्रियः सुतसोमो मियेधः।
यज्ञेन यज्ञमव यज्ञियः सन्यज्ञस्ते वज्रमहिहत्य आवत्॥

"One's intellect is purified with the Yajna"

(Rigveda 3-32-12)

There are many mantras in the four Vedas related to Yajnas, which inspire to perform holy and sacred Yajnas, in return of which all actions are done properly and purely.

ऋचां त्वः पोषमास्ते पुपुष्वान्गायत्रं त्वो गायति शक्वरीषु।
ब्रह्म त्वा वदति जातविद्यां यज्ञस्य मात्रां वि मिमीत उ त्वः ॥

"Rricham Tvah Poshamaaste Pupushvaan Gaayatram Tvo Gaayati Shakvareeshu, Brahmaa Tvo Vadati Jaatavidyam Yajnasa Maatram Vi Mimeeta U Twaaha"

(Rigveda:10-71-11)

In this mantra, there are four names of the persons who look after the essential duties of performing the ritual related to Yajna. They are Hotaa, Udgaataa, Brahama, and Adharvyu whose duties are as follows:

—to correct the pronunciations of the holy mantras,

—to sing mantras accordingly, to watch and advise for corrected proceedings of the Yajna and to construct the appropriate position of the *Vedi* where Yajna is to be performed, respectively. Yajna is scientific and essential duty of man to perform.

The importance of sacrificial life in the material, psychological and spiritual aspect has been clearly elaborated. The Yajna (sacrifice) is looked on generally as some actions limited to offerings made in the sacred fire. But Yajna is a very wide term that encompasses all good actions including prayers, associations, donations and the basic essentials of a systematical life.

Physical aspect of Yajna:

We ponder over the ideals, hidden in the basic sacrificial performance of Yajna. The welfare of all prominently does manifest as its primary aim, because the materials such as clarified butter and herbs etc. which a person offers in fire in a Yajna are not for his own individual good only. They are not congenial to him only but it is for the welfare of all and

that his own welfare is desired through this common welfare. As mentioned by Lord Krishna in Geeta (Chapter # 3 -Couplets from 9 to 15) "Yajna purifies air, which in turn causes rains, purifies all vegetation and herbs, and finally produces cereals that bestow longevity of life.

If all citizens perform Yajna daily, as was prevalent in the Vedic age, this statement will not be an airy imagination but will again become a reality, as it was then. Today, the vaxatious and intricate problems of the atmospheric pollution are endangering human existence on earth. This serious challenge can be best met, alongwith other means by the device of Yajna also and the congenial changes can be brought about by further discovering the materials for oblations more suited to our present needs.

Psychological aspects of Yajna:

The benefits cannot be limited only to the Yajmaaana on the plea that he has incurred all expenditure on it. The benefits will be for all animate beings when Yajna through oblations is performed, since the whole atmosphere is affected, extending the benefits to all beings, including the person performing the Yajna, and all those who breathe the air purified by the Yajna, But on the contrary, if the yajmaana wants to restrict the benefits only to himself or to his friends and family members only, it will not be possible to do so. He will have to seek benefits for all. Further the Vedic axiom teaches that we should always see each other with friendly eyes and fearlessness, as is provided in the following Vedic verse:

अभयं मित्रादभयममित्रादभयं ज्ञातादभयं परोक्षात्।
अभयं नक्तमभयं दिवा नः सर्वा आशा मम मित्रं भवन्तु॥

"Abhayam Naktam Abhayam Divaa Nah Sarvaa aashaa Mam Mitram Bhavantu."

(Atharvaveda: 19.15.6)

It means may all quarters be friendly for us so we may feel fearless throughout day and night. This will help in the

development of an outlook of brotherhood for all, with no enmity towards anyone. This outlook is the psychological aspect of Yajna.

The Spiritual aspect of Yajna:

When fire is kindled during Yajna, the mantra recited five times alongwith five oblations means my soul is like fuel to God who enkindles to enhance it and may He bestow upon us—progeny, domestic animals, good intelligence, food grains etc. with all blessing of happy and prosperous life. He also concludes thereby affirming that his oblations are for God alone, The Intelligent and not for himself.

Through aforesaid mantra the person performing Yajna (offering oblations in the ritual fire) implores God to enlighten his soul with His light. Just as the समिधा Samidhaa (wood) and the materials offered as oblations into fire by getting burnt into the fire attain the properties of fire but still keep their identity, in the same way the individual soul maintains its individuality, though pervaded by God in the state of salvation. It has a separate identity full of light. This is the spiritual aspect of the अग्निहोत्र Agnihotra.

The prayer is in the plural number, since its purpose is not to implore only for individual's benefit but it also implores the welfare of all by bestowing gifts of intelligence, animals, cereals, vitality energy and wealth.

This mantra of oblation and many other mantras recited while offering oblations end with words इदन्न मम् *"Idam Na Mama"* i.e. it is not for me or it does not belong to me (alone) but is dedicated to God.

Thus all the three aspects of Yajna namely physical, psychological and spiritual have been upheld to confirm the veracity of the ninth commandment.

Here it has been considered as to how the process and the progress of the community and the individual can be reconciled and attained. These two most perplexing concepts have been miraculously elucidated and elaborated by Swami Dayananda Saraswati with his clairvoyance

(divine foresight) in a conciliatory manner. He commands in this ninth principle that every man should strive for his advancement but he should not be satisfied only with his own progress but should simultaneously attempt for the common good as well.

Believing that his progress is the progress of all, as he is also one individual included in the sum total of individuals which make up the society. The vast differences of the two problems of individuals and social progress have been harmonized. The success of the progress of the individual and the community as well as their welfare can only be achieved by the strict observance of this principle. All men should subordinate themselves in observing and following social rules beneficial to all and all should be independent in respect of every beneficial rule.

It is clear that "Yajna Karma" is the best deed in humans' lives. It is described in the Brahmana:

यज्ञो वै श्रेष्ठतमं कर्म

"Yajyovai Shreshtatamam Karma"

(Shatpath Brahman: 1.7.1.2)

It means Yajna Karma is the best deed in the world.

यज्ञोहि श्रेष्ठतमं कर्म

"Yajyohi Shreshtamam Karma"

(*Taittriya Brahman:* 3.2.1.4)

It means only Yajna is the best deed in human life.

The ultimate aim of human life is to get rid of all pains and attain liberation. Yajna is said to be the best Nishkaam karma.

Agnihotra; A wonder Weapon:

1. Agnihotra reduces nearly 77.5% pollution.
2. 16% harmful bacteria are destroyed after a single Havan.
3. Yajna process can produce clouds causing rainfall.
4. Natural calamities are controlled by Yajnas.
5. Many incurable diseases like epilepsy, leprosy,

Cancer etc. and all types of skin and lung diseases (specially to control the inflammation and/or fungus of the skin) etc. can be cured with Yajna.

6. It has been observed that Agnihotra has been helpful in case of mentally under-developed children whose I.Q. level increased.
7. It is an important home therapy that can fight diseases and pollution and to increase agricultural production.
8. Daily performance of Yajna removes environment pollution, which affects not only human beings but also trees, plants and animals.
9. Yajna-ash has power to destroy insects around the plants and trees and plants grow wonderfully well where its ash is thrown.
10. Yajna (Agnihotra or Havan) is a greatest medicine with unique value. Its ash is also used in the form of tablets, capsules, ointments, eye-drops etc. in the treatment of various diseases. Chronic wounds are healed with the application of Agnihotra ash.
11. Stomach disorders also cured by Agnihotra ash. Effect of this Holy Ash on skin diseases is just miraculous.
12. When sugar is burnt, it has the power to purify air. It destroys diseases like small pox, cholera, tuberculosis etc. By burning raisin, the germs causing typhoid are destroyed in 30 minutes in its smoke and the germs causing other diseases in an hour or two.
13. When a Yajna is performed with cow's ghee and other purifying material like Samagri etc. it produces four kinds of gases viz. Ethylene Oxide, Propylene Oxide, Formaldyhide and Beta Propyo Lactine. After pouring ghee over fire, Estilyn is produced. This Estilyn is high temperature energy, which draws polluted air to itself and purifies it. The gases produced by burning cow's ghee can fight

many diseases and remove mental tension.

N.B. There is infinite list of the benefits from Yajna Viz. Environmental Purification, Fitness, Longevity, Rain, Milk, Food, Health, Wealth, Energy, Comforts, Children, Vitality, Sinlessness, Good Character, Awareness, Non-enmity, Self-defensiveness, Fame, Enlightenment, Speaking-power, Peace of mind, Divine attributes etc. *(Rigveda: 3.25.2).*

One thing is to be borne in mind that God-realisation or Emancipation is not possible only with Yajna rituals. God is attained by Yajna of the self i.e. meditation or Yoga.

Clarification of some doubts about Yajna:

Quest : Is a person not performing Yajna guilty?

Clarification : Yes, if man is responsible for causing pollution by excretion, respiration, decay of materials used by him, gases of vehicles driven by him, smoke of factories run by him and foul smell produced by him, it is his duty to rectify the evil effect of these processes. Agnihotra is the only way to do so.

Quest : There are other scientific ways of purifying water, air, food products etc. What is then the importance of Yajna?

Clarification : Many disinfectants, antiseptics and preservatives are used to purify and protect water, air, food products, etc., these days. However, these materials are not successful in destroying all kinds of germs. They rather destroy the food value of these articles and cause many side effects. If one problem is solved, they create another.

Quest : Some people say that the Yajna fire produces Carbon Dioxide, which is harmful for human beings. Is it correct?

Clarification : If the Yajna vessel is properly constructed, pieces of wood from only the prescribes trees are picked up and required quantity of cow's ghee and

purifying materials are used, very little Carbon Dioxide is produced. Even that is consumed by the trees and plants in the Yajnashala area. As compared with Carbon Dioxide, the Yajna produces many other useful gases which remove environmental pollution and create healthy and pleasant smell all around.

It must be noted that the little Carbon Dioxide produced during the Yajna is not as harmful or poisonous as are the gases emitted by big works, mills, factories, vehicles and railway engines. If we are putting up with the harmful gases of factories for our little gain, we can live with the little Carbon dioxide produced during the Yajna for our bigger gain. It may be emphasized that the trees and plants consume this Carbon dioxide, while the poisonous gases from the factories cannot become food for the plants. It is therefore unfair and prejudicial to oppose Yajna due to this reason.

Quest : How can the Yajna performed with a little ghee and purifying material put an end to large scale dangerous environment pollution in villages and cities?

Clarification : A single unit of powerful Yajna gas is capable of purifying a thousand units of polluted air emitted by vehicles, mills, factories etc. Moreover, it is the duty of everyone to remove the pollution spread by him. If in the world inhabited by 6,000 million people, 100 or 200 million families start practising Yajna everyday, this pollution can be brought under check.

Power gases produced by Yajna affect the trees, creepers and plants around such a way that they can withstand all future pollution.

It is a scientific fact that powder is more powerful than solid substance, liquid is more powerful than powder and gas is more powerful than liquid. With just 10 grams of heeng powder mixed with ghee can give pleasant smell to one quintal of cooked pulse. A red chili put in fire affects thousands of persons. In the same way, the pleasant smelling gases produced during the Yajna are full of curative and healing powers capable of destroying pollution and creating

sweet sensation.

The vast Yajnas can be arranged at various places throughout the country at national level and the problem of environmental pollution can be solved.

Quest : In these days of rising prices, is it wise to destroy ghee and other useful materials by putting them in fire?

Clarification : Nothing is destroyed but it is only transformed into another subtle form, when it is put in the fire. From solid or liquid state, the material; is changed into gas. The consumption of 50 or 100 grams of ghee is beneficial only for a single person but the same quanitity benefits thousands of people, animals, birds and plants when it is transformed into gas. The smell of incense sticks remains in the house throughout the day.

Even in these days of rising prices, we eat costly food, wear costly clothes, and buy costly television sets, scooters or cars. Why should we stop Yajna though we get numerous benefits from it?

Quest : If the purpose of Yajna is to make environment fragrant, it can well be done with incense sticks, scents, flowers etc. What is the necessity of Yajna?

Clarification : The purpose of Yajna is not merely to spread fragrance but also to destroy water and air pollution. With the incense sticks or flowers, we create only pleasant smell and that too for a limited place. By putting ghee and purifying the materials in fire during Yajna, we remove environmental pollution besides making the air fragrant.

Incense sticks or flowers are not capable of driving polluted air out of the house and letting the pure air in, which is an important function of the Yajna. Thus incense sticks, etc. cannot be an alternative for Yajna.

Some Important Information and Rules and Regulations about Yajna-Karma :

Any karma done with love, dedication and with the intention of helping others is said to be "Yajna". The main purpose of performing Yajna-Karma or Agnihotra is for

purification of surrounding atmosphere and also to purify the body, mind and soul hence it is regarded as the best karma or best deed in the world. Yajna is the only Karma from which the five basic elements e.g. earth, water, fire, air and ether are purified. Yajna is beneficial for health, wealth, self-confidence, and peaceful life, social co-operation and achieving universal harmony.

Yajna is not any show business, on the contrary, it is also performed with the aim of communion with God, but if it is done with the intention of publicity and for monetary income, it is an insult to Yajna. It is the biggest sin to commercialize the Yajna Karma. Educated and religious persons should not entertain these type of "Showy and Commercialised" plays. One must know the rules and regulation i.e. code of conduct for performing the Yajna-Karma rituals. Some important rules and information collected from various books are as follows:—

The first action for Yajmaanas in Yajna-Karma is 'Varan' i.e. acceptation of the Purohit by applying sandalwood 'Tilak' on his forehead and offer him garland with respect. One has to obey his Purohit because in the yajna, he gives you guidance.

Eloquents about "Yajna" in Vedic literatures:

यज्ञौ वै श्रेष्ठतमं कर्म

"Yajyo Vai Shrashthatamam Karma"

(Shatpath Brahmana: 1.7.1.5)

means Yajna, is the best deed that purifies water, air and should be done with the intention of selflessness.

स्वर्गकामो यज्ञेत्

"Swarg-Kaamo Yajet" (Tandaya Brahmana: 16.15.5)

means It is said that Yajna should be performed with the intention of attaining worldly pleasures.

इमं यज्ञं वितता विश्वकर्मणा

"Imam Yajnam Vitata Vishwakarmana"

(Atharvaveda: 21.35.5)
which mean Yajna is blessing of almighty God as this life is elevated by God (Yajna).

अयं यज्ञो भुवनस्य नाभिः

"Ayam Yajyo Bhuvanasya Naabhihi"

(Yajurveda: 23.62)
It means Yajna (God) is the centre of this world because God creates, sustains and deluges the Universe for the benefit of all Jivas.

यज्ञेन यज्ञामयजंतत देवाः

"Yajyena Yajnamayajantata Devaha" (Yajurveda)
which means all so-called virtuous deeds in this world are called 'Yajna'.

ईजानः स्वगं यन्ति लोकम्

"Eijaanaha Swargam Yanti Lokam"

(Atharvaveda: 10.4.2.)
i.e. in this world, Yajna provides 'Swarga Loka' all pleasures to the performers. Yajna Karma fulfills all desires. Hence he who performs Yajna is always satisfied.

प्रंचं यज्ञं प्रणयत सखायाः

"Prancham Yajnam Pranayata Sakhayah"

(Rigveda: 10.10.2)
i.e. One must perform Yajna ritual while starting any new work.. It is an important ordinance from God.

द्रविणोदाः पिपीषति जुहोत प्र च तिष्ठत। नेष्ट्रदृतुभिरिष्यत॥

"Juhota Pra Cha Tishthata" (Rigveda: 1.15.9)
that is One who performs Yajna acquires fame and pleasures in his/her life. In other words it is advised to all—If you desire fame and pleasures in life do perform Yajna.

पांञ्चजन्यामया होतारं जुराध्वम्

"Panchjanamaya Hotram Jushadhwam" (*Veda*)
i.e. it is an important duty of all men of four Varnas i.e.

Brahman, Kshatri, Vaishya and Shudra including schedule tribe living in remote areas, to perform Yajna Karma.

अरं कृण्वन्तुं वेदिम्

"Aram Krinivantum Vedim" (Rigveda: 1.170.4)

which means that the Yajnashala (the place where Yajna is performed) is to be beautified and well decorated.

ऊर्ध्वं कृण्वन्त्वध्वरस्य केतुम्

"Urdhvam Krinivantvadhwarasyaketum"

(Rigveda: 3.8.8)

which means that Yajna is the best deed hence it should not be performed with oblations of anything which contain animal flesh etc. It is called अध्वर 'Adhwara' means there should be no killings of living beings. Flames of Yajna fire should be kept high.

* Rigveda advises to all brave and enthusiastic persons to perform Yajna Karma for their own upliftment and to perform their duties towards society and nation.

1. **Timing for Sandhya and Yajna-Karma:** Morning Sandhya or Meditation should be done before sunrise in the "Brahm-Mahurt" i.e. between 3.30 and 6.00 A.M. and Yajna should be performed after sunrise in the morning after Sandhya. Evening Yajna should be performed before sunset *(Light of Truth: Chapter 3)* and evening Sandhya just after the Yajna is finished. It is clear that "Yajnas must be performed in sunlight because of their scientific values" mentioned earlier. It is the essential duty of man to perform Sandhya *(Meditation)* and Yajna *(Agnihotra)* daily *(The Sam-Veda: 82)*.

Some special ceremonial/ritual Yajna can/may be performed according to the instruction received from the Brahma/purohit of Yajna.

2. **Yajna-Karma:** All actions/deeds done with the true intention of helping others are called "Yajna" and Yajna-Karma-kaand (performance of Homa) is one of the symbol of "Paropkaar" i.e. helping others. The main purpose of

performing Yajna is to create healthy and pollution free environment that makes all animate being healthy and pleasant and that is why Yajna is called the best Karma/deed in human life *(The Yajurveda: 2.14)*. It is also the Dharma or duty of all learned and worthy humans to perform Yajna-Karma with respect, love and devotion.

यज्ञौ वै श्रेष्ठत्तमं कर्म

"Yajyo Vai Shrettamam Karma" (The Veda)

3. **Recitation of Yajna-Mantras:** All mantras of Yajna should be from the Vedas only *(Atharvaveda: 19-58-5)* and they are compulsorily to be recited by the Yajmaanas

अक्रन् कर्म कर्मकृतः सह वाचा मयोभुवा।
देवेंभ्यः कर्ण कृत्वास्तं प्रेत सचाभुवः॥

"Agnim Vardhantu No Girah" (Rigveda: 3.10.6), "Akran Karmam Karmakritah sah Vaacha Mayobhuva" —Yajurveda: 3.47).

If they are unable to recite them properly, then only the Yajna-mantras are recited by Purohit or Brahma of the Yajna and all Yajmaanas listen to them carefully and devotionally. If Yajmaanas and guests can recite the Yajna Mantras correctly, they must recite the same. Recitation of the Vedic Mantras should be done sweetly but not loudly because Yajna surroundings should be purely religious and dedicated with worship of God hence they are pronounced dedicatedly so that mind is controlled and stabilized. In this way dedication and love towards Yajna is created **"Agnim Hinvantu No Dhiyah"** (*Rigveda:* 10.156.1).

This point is to be noted carefully that those in Sandhya (Meditation) recitation of Mantras are done in the mind but in Yajna i.e. in Agnihotra, they are recited loudly (not so loudly) so that all can listen. Chanting of the Vedic mantras protects Vedas, mantras are remembered easily, moreover one experiences the existence of God.

4. **Yajna-Shaala:** It is advisable to have clean and fixed place for performing Yajna and this place is called the

"Yajna-Shaala" that helps the Yajmaanas to maintain interest towards the noblest duty of performing Yajna-Karma. And for Meditation also it is advised by our ancient Rishis to have some separate room or lonely place for attaining inner peace and realisation of God.

5. **Aasan-Positions:** In big special yajna (Brihad Parayan Yajna) the sitting positions of Hota, Adhwaryu, Udgaataa and Brahma are reserved.

The sitting position of the Brahma or Purohit of Yajna is reserved in the South, facing the North and for the Hota or Yajmaanas it is in the West facing the East. The sitting position of the Adhwaryu is in the South, facing the North and position of the Udgaataa is reserved in the East facing the West. The Havan Kund is placed in the center. It should be noted that level position of Brahma's Aasan should be slightly higher so that he can see the proceedings of Yajna properly. Yajmaanas' sitting position should not be higher than the fire position of Yajna. (*Rigveda:* 10-88-19) (निरुक्त *Nirukta:* 7-31). " A comfortable sitting position is called Aasan" (*Yog Darshan: Sadhna Paad: Sutra* # 46)

6. **Yajna-Dress:** Brahma and/or purohit should wear clean white clothes with a yellow shawl. The dress for the Yajmaana Dampati (husband and wife performing Yajna) should have four[24] new, loose, clean and white silken or cotton clothes while performing Yajna (संस्कार विधि Sanskar Vidhi). Here intention is to wear good new clothes. Moreover, if possible they should wear 'Dhoti and Kurta', which according to learned Brahmans, is said to be the most suitable dress for Yajna-Karma.

7. **Right of Yajna Ritual:** The Yajmaanas and Brahma or Purohit must wear and adopt the "Yajyopaveet" before performing Yajna-Karma and also it is their Dharma (Duty) to maintain wearing the same even after the Yajna is over. Only Yajyopaveeta gives right of performing Yajna-Karma. On the other hand the Vedic-Dharma has granted full permission and right to all humans for performing "Sandhya" i.e. Meditation of God.

8. **The Best Deed:** Everyone including Purohit and Yajmaanas who is taking part in the Yajna proceedings must be clean and should have taken bath before performing or attending it because the Yajna-Karma, according to the Veda, is the best karma (श्रेष्ठतमाय कर्मण *"Shreshtamay Karmane"– Yajur veda: 1-1*). All learned Yajmaanas and their guests are advised not to look here and there or talk or whisper to anyone sitting next to them (Sanskar Vidhi) and not to give a smile or wish Namaskaar (salutation) to anyone during the proceeding of Yajna. They are supposed to be fully devoted to God and concentrate on Yajna-karma/ proceedings and/also meditating God's original name "AUM" in their mind.

9. **Essential Things for Yajna:** Utensils used in Yajna-Sanskaras should be made of gold, silver or copper metals or wooden (Sanskar-Vidhi). In modern times utensils of brass or stainless steel can also be used. Usually the following utensils are used during Yajna. One Deepak, three or four plates for keeping Homa offerings. Ghee pot with one or two long spoons (called स्रूवा Sruwa) for oblations. Four Aachaman pots with small spoons. One plate for keeping sweets etc., One small bowl for keeping cooked rice and One Kalash[25] i.e. big bowl for sprinkling water (जल प्रसेचन Jal-Prasechan) and Dhoop packet and Agarbattis. Two napkins or tissue papers to wipe hands and lastly one pair of Yajyopaveet.

10. **Aachaman:** It is an important act of the Brahma and Yajmaanas to take three sips of water called 'Aachaman' before the start of Yajna. It is advisable and allowed for Yajmaanas and Brahma of the Yajna to have 'Aachaman' (to take a few sips of water), if /whenever they feel thirsty or lazy during the process of Yajna-karma.

11. **The Eight Mantras of Worship:** In the beginning of all Sanskaras the eight Mantras of ईश्वरस्तुतिप्रार्थनोपासना मन्त्रा: "Ishwar-Stuti-Prarthana-Upasana" along with their meanings should be recited by a learned person or Prohit and on the other hand, all should listen to them carefully and

think about them.[26]

12. **Recitation of "AUM":** It is observed that many pundits and people recite "AUM" before all mantras, which is against the Shastras. It is not correct to recite or repeat "AUM" before and/or in the end of each and every mantra of Sandhya or Prayers. It's against the system of 'Shastras' and Vedic beliefs. One must follow the directions and rules given in the authorised Vedic prayer books. So, "AUM" should be pronounced or recited only once before the first mantra of different Karma, subject or chapter. Where there is difference of Karma, the recitation of 'OM" is recited in the beginning of every Mantra. One can observe this system in "Panch-Maha-Yajna-Vidhi" one of the famous books written by Maharshi Dayananda Saraswati. Here are some verses from the Ashtaadhyaayee that prove these facts about recitation of 'OM'—

ओमभ्यादाने

"Omabhyaadaane" (Ashtadhyaayee: 8/2/87)

प्रणवष्टे

"Pranavashtehe" (Ashtaadhyaayee: 8/2/89).

For detailed explanation on this subject, our inquisitive readers are requested to refer "Sandhyopaasana

Vidhee"* and / or "Arya Satsang Gutka"*. (Also one can refer the book "Vedic Nitya Karma Vidhi" -Pt. Yudhishthir Meemansak)

[Important: *These small prayer books are composed by Mahar'shi Dayananda Saraswati (in Vikram Samvat 1920 i.e. year 1860 AD.) on the basis of the Vedic information originally recollected and used by our ancient Rishis.] For more detailed information one must refer "Sanskar Vidhi"]

13. Material for Oblations: The Yajmaanas are suggested by A'rsha Granthas to offer all Aahutis* (Oblations) of Pure and Hot Ghee (Yajurveda: 17-55, 20-45 and 21-39) and Samagri* made of fragrance, energetic, sweetish and curative things for the benefits of all animate beings. More and detailed information interested readers are

requested to refer—

"Rigvedadi-Bhashyabhumika", *"Rigveda Bhashya"* and *"Sanskar Vidhi"* by Mahar'shi Dayananda Saraswati).

Oblation of any fleshy things is restricted (not permitted) in the yajna-karma. Yajna is called "Adhwar" *(Nirukta: 2.7)* which mean there is no 'Violence or killing' of any type in Yajna. Therefore! Samidha should be watched carefully (free from insects) before putting into the fire. [Rigveda: 1.1.8, Rig: 1.26.1, Rig: 1.44.13, Yajurveda: 1/1, 6/11, 13/43, 14/8, Atharvaveda: 4.24.3, 1.4.2, 5.12.2, 18.2.2, Manu: 3.16, etc. There are many mantras in the Veda that says "to protect all types of animals, don't kill them". No oblation of any flesh of any creature is allowed in Yajna ritual because Yajna is for the benefit of all. Brutal killing of animals for the sake of taste or oblation is the biggest sin.]

14. **Correct Timings for Oblations:** Oblations of pure ghee and Samagri should be offered in Yajna-Kund only with the recitation of स्वाहा "Swaaha", hence Yajmaanas are advised not to offer any oblation before or after the recitation of "Swaaha". This is one of the codes of conduct of the Yajna-Karma that should be followed by all taking part in the Yajna. For this one should refer:—

मन्त्रानां वाचास्नार्थत्वात्

"Mantranaam Vachasnarthtwaat"

(Meemansa Darshan 12/3/25).

And also refer

मन्त्रांतैहि कर्मापिः सन्निपात्यौऽमिधानात्

"Mantraantaihi Karmaadihi Saannipaatyo Bhidhaanaat" *(Kaatyaayan Shrout Sutra 1/35)*

It is clearly written "Kriya or Action should start only after the recitation of mantra is complete".

Yajna Karma should be performed with recitation of "Swaaha" "Swaha Yajnam Krinotan." *(Rigveda: 1.13.12)*

15. **Handling of Sruwa:** The "Sruwa" or the long

spoon used for offering oblation of pure ghee in Yajna-Kund, is to be held by the thumb, middle and ring finger and oblation of Samagri is also to be offered in the same way.

16. Samidha: This point is to be noted very carefully that all the "Samidha" (small thin wood pieces) used in Yajna, must be fully dried because wet Samidhaa creates smoke, which is very injurious to health (Sanskar-Vidhi). Homa should not be performed with charcoals. (**Yajurveda:* 22/15 —Commentary by Mahr'shi Dayananda Saraswati)

17. **Safety Points During Fire Ritual:** From the safety point of view, it is advised to all our learned Yajmaanas to mix a little quantity of pure ghee in the Samagri before the start of Yajna. Because, when the oblation of dry Samagri is performed to the Yajna-fire it creates flying sparks which can be harmful to Yajmaanas' clothes and dangerous for the surroundings too.

18. **Inquisitive Yajmaana:** It is the duty of Yajmaanas to ask any question relating to Yajna-Kriya at the end, if they really want to know more about Yajna proceedings. All Yajna deeds are scientific so Yajmaanas have all right to know all about it.

19. **Swarga and Moksha:** Yajna helps Yajmaanas to acquire all possible worldly pleasure (Swarga or Heaven) and not Emancipation. Performing good deeds with devotion, selflessness and renunciation attains emancipation.

20. **Correct Pronunciation of Holy Mantras:** It is very important for Yajmaanas and Purohit/Brahma to recite the Yajna-Mantras correctly with proper accent and rhythm, which gives peace of mind and realisation of God's bliss. Incorrect pronunciation will reverse the whole meaning of the mantras.

21. **Scarification of Donor:** Oblation of Pure Ghee and Samagri should not be performed miserly, but must be performed according to the size of the Yajna-Kund (Vessel of Yajna). Miser always remains miser and donor who give away willingly, always remains happy and prosperous in his/her life.

22. **Meaning of Swaaha:** There are many meanings of the word "Swaha". Oblations of pure ghee and/or Samagri should be offered in Yajna-fire while chanting the Vedic-Mantras ending with the word "Swaha" (Shatpath Brahman: 1.5.3.13, 3.3.2.7). Oblations offered are not considered complete without chanting "Swaha" (Shatpath Brahman: 4.5.2.17). The Rigveda mantra also describes the same feelings (Rigveda: 10.110.11).

"May deities take our oblations offered in the Yajna-fire with the chanting of Swaha" (Nirukta: 8.20).

"Swaaha" is said to be the soul of Yajna. "Swaaha" means Sacrifice or Offering with dedication. It perishes egoism, selfness and pride. When joined with mentally, verbally and physically, "Swaaha" makes life successful. Hence all Yajmaanas and guests present in Yajna proceeding (Agnihotra) should recite "Swaaha", this shows that all members, present in the Yajna, are really involved in the Yajna-Karma. "Swaaha" has another meaning also that is to speak sweetly and truly to everyone in the society.

23. **Special Oblation of Repenting:** It is very important to be remembered that स्विष्टकृदाहुति *"Swishtakrit Aahuti"* is also called प्रायश्चित्ताहुति *"Praayashchit Aahuti"* or *"the Oblation of Repenting"* should not be offered by sweets or any eatable things but pure ghee and boiled rice only without salt, particularly in Dev-Pooja. All Yajmaanas including the Purohit or Brahma of the Yajna must offer this oblation.

24. **Yajna and Anchorites:** In Yajna-Karma the Yajmaanas are the most important people, hence they should perform the Yajna-Karma with devotion and love. Otherwise unwilling performance of Yajna-Karma does not give proper pleasure. **Manusmriti: 2-97** says "It is useless to perform Yajna only for show". Duty and intention of the Brahma, guide-person of the Yajna karma, should not be only to receive or collect huge money from his Yajmaanas but to guide the correct Vedic proceedings of Yajna Karma, to his Yajmaanas.

* It is one of the opinions of all ancient and modern Rishis including Mahr'shi Dayananda Saraswati (Sanskar Vidhi: Sanyaasa Ashram) that an anchorite (Sanyasi) is excused from all Karma-Kaanda i.e. religious rituals. He is not bound to perform any Yajna-Karma. In unavoidable conditions for example when a Purohit is not available and Yajna has to be performed immediately, at that time a Sanyasi can guide the Yajmaanas but even then he is not authorised to take part or be seated as the 'Brahma' or 'Purohit' of that Yajna Karma. Of course! For education purposes he can conduct classes for showing the correct techniques and procedures and give more information about Yajna-Karma (fire-rituals) privately or openly, because his life itself is a Yajna i.e. selfless service.

* The great sage Manu says, **"An anchorite (Sanyasi) has no responsibility to enkindle fires.** (*Manu:* 6/6).

The Vedic Dharma has excused an anchorite from doing any religious rituals i.e. "Karma-kaanda". Yajna karma being a "Karma-kaanda" also indicates that an anchorite (Sanyasi) while entering into Sanyaas-ashram has already taken off his Yajyopaveeta, which means that in future he is freed from all Karma-kaanda. It is an important and essential duty of a true anchorite (Sanyasi) to distribute Vedic knowledge to all sects of people in the society and not to enter in active public politics. As Sanyasi (an anchorite) is said to be in the state of Spirituality or the state of realisation of his own-self and God, where he enjoys God's bliss, on the contrary he has already renounced all his worldly desires. All Yajnas are performed to fulfill the desires of Yajmaanas.

* Once Pt. Guru Dutt Vidyarthi asked a question to Swami Shraddhanand (Founder of Gurukul Kangri - Haridwar) whether a Sanyasi could perform yajna or no. Swamiji replied "A Sanyasi who is busy in servicing the Grihastha (householder) people day and night and entangled in worldly life, running after food and money, like householders, then he should perform Deva-Pooja and Havan. It is said that 'Pranayama' is an essential Yajna for

an anchorite.

* It is said in the Shatpath Brahman (2.6.1.18) that Brahma, Hota, Adhwaryu, Udgaataa and Yajmaana walk towards the west while an anchorite walks towards the east.

It is clear that duties of an anchorite are totally different from others. To become a Brahma, Hota, Adhwaryu, Udgaataa or Yajmaana of any Yajna, these are the rights of those persons, who have worn Yajyopaveeta; otherwise Yajna-Karma being non-systemised becomes fruitless. It is the right of well-educated Brahmins who have a family life and also who have completed the religious and spiritual education in Vedic Gurukulas (institution), to become 'Brahma' of any Yajna.

Laatyaayan Shroutra Sutra also admits this theory that

सर्वेषां यज्ञोपवीतातौदकाचमते नित्य कर्मोपयातम्

"Sarvesham Yajyopaveetaodakaachamate Nitye Karmopayaataam" (1.2.4)

This explains that a ब्रह्मा Brahmaa, होता Hota, अधवर्यु Adhwaryu, उद्‌गाता Udgaataa and also यजमान Yajmaana of any Yajna should adopt Yajyopaveeta and take Aachaman (three sips of water) before the start of a yajna. How can these be applied to an anchorite (Sanyasi)? Is it possible?

* Of course! Brahma of Yajna is entitled to give oblation in the Yajna fire (Gopatha Brahman). This means that an anchorite has no right to give oblation in Yajna fire hence it is proved that a Sanyasi cannot become a Brahma of any Yajna.

* "Yajna is entitled or limited unto Brahmacharya, Grahastha and Vaanaprasth Ashramas. Yajna does not have its existence in the Sanyaas ashram. Purohit is one who is a householder. Any Brahmachari, Vaanprasthi and Sanyasi cannot perform Yajna Karma for others. It is the duty of a household Purohit to perform Yajna for others. (It is stated in the Dharmarya Sabha's administrative rules # 12 which was decided in Annual meeting of the Saarvadeshik Sabha held in 1984-85)

25. **Yajna for Ladies:** It is Non-Vedic and wrong tradition to offer oblation of "Balivaishwadev Yajna" in Yajna/Agnihotra because बलिवैश्वदेव यज्ञ "Balivaishwadev Yajna" is meant for the ladies to be performed in the kitchen of their houses after cooking food for their family. Oblation of this Yajna must be home cooked food without salt and should be offered to the fire in the kitchen. This is the correct Vedic-Oblation of "Balivaishwadev Yajna. This is the first part of this Yajna and the second part is to keep aside some portion of cooked food and give the same to needy persons and other animate beings. He/she is sinner who eats alone. (*The Geeta:* 3-13)

26. **Timing for Daan and Dakshina:** "Dakshina" (offering with respect) must be given to Brahma and purohits before the completion of Yajna-Karma i.e. before 'Purnaahuti' i.e. the last oblation. (Meemansa Darshan). "Daan" i.e. scarification of money etc. should be given to worthy recipients of religious and/or educational societies.

27. **Honour and Respect of Purohits and Brahman:** At the start of Yajna, Purohit and Brahma should be given full respect by offering them flowery garland, coconut, clothes etc. It is a Non-Vedic tradition or ritual (because it is not mentioned anywhere in any authoritative literature) to offer 'Tilak' (marking) with Kumkum (Red colour powder usually used in religious ritual in India) and rice on forehead of Brahma/Prohit and Yajmaanas.

28. **Non-Vedic Tradition:** The Brahma is an authority to watch and rectify the mistakes during the proceedings of Yajna. Usually Brahma or Purohit does not demand anything, but if they really demand money or other things instead of their duty of performing Yajna-Karma, it is Non-Vedic tradition.

29. **Daan or Donation:** The correct meaning of "Yajna" is the combination of "Dev Pooja, Sangati-Karan and Daan". Usually to give something with the intention of help to others is called "Daan", donation, or charity. But in the Yajna rituals, the meaning of 'Daan" is not related to

give alms to beggars etc. but the correct meaning of 'Daan' is to renounce and sacrifice i.e. renunciation of bad habits, evils etc. It is an essential duty of every Yajmaana to offer/supply/give Knowledge, Money, Food, Clothes etc. with his/her capacity to worthy recipients. Giving knowledge is said to be the best Daan in Vedic philosophy. Here in the context of Yajna, the term "Daan" is defined as —"Offering or sacrificing everything with renunciation to Supreme God".

30. **Dakshina:** It is a most important and essential duty of all Yajmaanas and members present in the Yajna proceedings (Rigveda: 6-64-1, 2-12-21, 2-169-40, 4-17-13.) (Yajurveda: 26-2, 20-70) (Aitareya Brahman-6) to offer "Dakshina" to Sanyasi, Vaanprasthi, Brahma, Vedic Purohit, and learned guest before Purnanhuti. This "Dakshina" must be given to them in their right hand with full respect and folded hands and offering "Namaskaar".

(Rigveda: 3-39-6) Rigveda: 6-64-1, 2-12-21, 2-169-40, and 4-17-13.) (Yajurveda: 26-2 and 20-70.) (Aitareya Brahman—6)

"All Yajnas from अग्निहोत्र Agnihotra to अश्वमेध यज्ञ Ashvamedha Yajna are said to be successful only when Dakshina is given". (Atharvaveda: 19-19-6).

One more thing that the Yajurveda and Atharvaveda explain is that "the Yajmaanas who offer homemade clothes and gold as Dakshina always lead on the path of truth and prosper". (Atharvaveda: 9-5-24 and Yajurveda: 7-45).

"The donor never becomes miser." (*Yajurveda:* 7-46)

Dakshina can be offered to any worthy recipient of anything like money, food, clothing, utensils, ornaments etc. with full shradha and heartfelt respect. There is no question of quantity but quality must be excellent...

31. Panch-Maha-Yajna: One more important thing is to be remembered by all our learned readers that according to Vedic literature and A'rsha Granthas there are only "Panch-Maha-Yajna" (Manusmriti: 3-70) or "Five Great Yajnas". They are:

1. **Brahm-Yajna:** i.e. Vedic-Sandhya and Study of

Vedic literature; Vedic Sandhya is the part of Brahm-Yajna that includes swadhyaaya—study of scriptures, introspection and meditation.

2. **Dev-Yajna:** i.e. Agnihotra;

3. **Pitri-Yajna:** i.e. Service of living deities i.e. mother, father, teacher, Guru and elderly persons etc.

4. **Bhoot-Yajna:** i.e. Balivaishwadev-Yajna i.e. to offer ten oblations of cooked food (without salt) in kitchen fire; and lastly,

5. **Atithi-Yajna:** (*Rigveda:* 10.117.6) i.e. service of learned unexpected guests. (अतिथि Atithee i.e. Guests are those people, who travel to different places in the service of humanity, come to the house of a family i.e. 'Grihasta' without prior information for shelter.

The benefit of this Panch-Maha-Yajnas is 'Self-Upliftment' (Manusmriti: 2-18). For more detailed information and appreciation kindly refer Atharva-Veda: Kaand: 15 and Sukta: 10 to 14)

N.B.: Now-a-days several Yajnas are performed in the name of "Maha-Yajnas" in many parts of India and abroad, with devotion and respect. Of course, this is a very good sign that more and more people of this planet are adopting the Vedic theory and philosophy, and adoring the Vedic Dharma as religion of humanity. Religious people must know that "According to the Vedas there are Only Five Maha Yajnas" as mentioned earlier.

This point is to be noted by all that any other Yajnas or other festival rituals, which are not based on the Vedic theory and/or it's beliefs, cannot be called "Maha-Yajna". For example: Ganapati-Maha-Yajna, Vaishno-Devi-Maha-Yajna, Saraswati-Maha-Yajna, Vishwa Shanti Maha-Yajna etc.

It is also wrong to pronounce Rig, Yajur, Sam or Atharva Veda-Paaraayan-Maha-Yajna including Gayatri-Maha-Yajna etc. These 'Yajnas' can be named as religious rituals that are performed on some auspicious occasions to

beautify the surroundings and to fulfill some particular desires.

अनाप्यं शारद यज्ञ Anaapyam Shaarad Yajna

It is certainly an Excellent and the Rarest Yajna performed once a year on the first day of Navaratri Festival (The first day of every winter season which is believed to be the first day of the creation of our Universe). This Special Sharad Yajna is performed continuously day and night (non-stop) for twenty-four hours. Incredible Indeed!

वि ये दधुः शरदं मासमादहर्यज्ञमक्तुं चादृचम्।
अनाप्यं वरुणो मित्रो अर्यमा क्षत्रं राजान आशत॥

(Rigveda: 7-66-11)

In God's words: "This Rarest Shaarad Yajna is beneficial for mankind because it is the provider of peace of mind, health and wealth. Every one should perform it and inspire others to do the same."

एष स्य वां पूर्वगत्वेव सख्ये निधिर्हितो माध्वी रातो अस्मे।
अहेळता मनसा यातमर्वागश्नन्तो हव्यं मानुषीषु विक्षु॥

(Rigveda: 7-67-7)

The Doctrine of Incarnation

'Avataran' is a noun in Hindi, which means 'to come down'. The person who wants to come down or desires to come down from a higher place, and who actually comes down, is called an 'Avatar'. Thus an Avatar has to be an animate being and has to take birth. All these animate beings possess the power of desire, feeling of pleasure, pain, and capacity, more or less, of thinking and making efforts instinctively as well as thought out. This power which makes animate beings to function is called '*Soul* or *Aatma*'.

Some people think that God in His whole form is beyond birth, but He partially, in phases incarnates Himself, which envisages the doctrine of incarnation, giving rise to disputable discourses in this respect, unsupported by the evidences in the Vedas. On the other hand the concept is also incomprehensible to logic and reason. The doctrine of incarnation was vehemently criticized on various points, contained in several books. All the arguments cannot be incorporated in this book. Only a few important points are discussed here:—

Contrary to other attributes of God:

If incarnation of God is assumed, many of His very important attributes automatically stand confuted.

If a phase or part of God is believed to take birth, in such case God will not continue to remain wholly perfect (as all those who are born and die are subject to limitations and imperfections). If we believe in His birth naturally His death will follow. God will then be accepted as the cycle of birth and death like normal beings. If a phase or part like God takes birth, the attributes of phase or part logically exist in

the whole also. It means before birth and after death He did not exist. His attribute of being Beginningless (अनादि Anaadi) and infinite (अनन्त Annant) eternal and His All-Pervading nature will stand confuted. God is all pervading in every minutest particle and atom as such in an incarnation where from He will come and whither He will go? If by incarnation God takes a form qualified with limitation (of an animal, of a human being or of any other), His attributes of formlessness, and limitlessness or of infinity is contradicted. It is impossible to believe the argument that infinite God can be confined into the womb of a mother or in any form shape or body.

God is Nirakara or formless so He cannot be limited in any shape, size or body. Only if one attribute of God is accepted that He is having form, His other several important attributes are contradicted automatically. God with a form cannot be Omnipresent, Omnipotent, Omniscient, Unbegotten, Infinite, Unchangeable, Beginningless, All-pervading, Creator of the universe, Imperishable, Eternal etc. A power with a form may possess all these attributes is not possible; cannot logically be proved and cannot be supported by any evidence from the Vedas. God is only formless and that formless God who alone is adorable. According to different subject, this point has to be repeated again and again so that readers bear in their minds that God is omnipresent and conscious entity. Hence He is formless.

It would be against all logic to believe that God does take a human or other form and still He remains formless too. It is never possible to hold such diagonally opposite attributes together simultaneously nor it is understandably acceptable to a person with open mind reasoning.

All the incarnations were subjected to suffering, pain and happiness in their lives, hence, by accepting such incarnations, God cannot be proved to be free from pain and pleasure. Their lives are full of changes, so God loses the attribute as changeless (अविकारी Avikaari). Further all incarnations grew old so God like ordinary man also have to

be conceived as decaying. Besides all the incarnations of God met with death, as all know that Bhagwan Shri Krishna was shot by an arrow, and others also died in some way or the other. Being so how would it be possible to prove that God is immortal and imperishable.

It is said that God to further the cause of righteousness, to kill the demons, to punish the wicked, to eradicate the evil and to bless His devotees, incarnates himself. Out of the four Yugas, सत्युग the Satyuga is said to be the foremost in righteousness, while in त्रेतायुग the Tretaa, द्वापरयुग the Dwaapara and कलियुग the Kaliyuga as righteousness tend to decrease and sins go on increasing gradually. It is but strange to uphold the necessity of 23 out of 24 incarnations in the holy ages of Satayuga, Dwaapara and Tretaa and only one out of the twenty-four incarnations in Kaliyuga, the most sinful period still awaited.

If the purpose of incarnation is to uphold righteousness, their least number should have been in Satayuga and the largest number in Kaliyuga, but the position is reverse. Is it reasonably conceivable?

The logic that God incarnates to kill demons is to underestimate the Omnipotent God. The Omnipresent, Who can create the whole universe and can only destroy the universe by deluge, cannot be believed to incarnate and to suffer all agony of the coming into the womb of a mother, just to kill Ravana, Kansa and other demons, who were not even a drop compared to the universe.

The Omnipresent God was inside the body of the demons also, He could kill them from within their own bodies, then why incarnation?

It is also said that God incarnates for the enactment of his sports (Leelaa) and His might.

The whole universe with numberless stars, the Moon, the Sun, the Milky Way, the miraculous acts are so vivid and impressive proof of His might. Leelaa that in comparison to all this, the acts of incarnations are totally insignificant, that is not understandable to bring the Almighty, Omnipresent

God to the level of animal forms or to human level, full of limitations and not devoid of errors as well. Maata Sita who was forced to face अग्नि परीक्षा Agni-Pariksha (fire ordeal) succeeded there, but even then she was exiled while she was pregnant. Further Cheeraharana or taking away garments of ladies bathing at river banks, Killing all the generals of the Kauravas against the rules of war decided at the start of the Mahabharata war, killing all the innocent Kshatriyas because one Kshatriya killed the father of Shri Parshurama and Shri Rama and Parshurama both incarnations were face to face in struggle in the court of Janaka, are all such instances. The list of which could be stretched to any length. Yogis and Rishis (saints and sages) worship God for their whole life to get rid of the cycle of birth and death, the pains of birth and the horrors of death.

The sad part of the concept is that the devotees of the same God have believed God Himself to come in the cycle of birth and death, when salvation is the aim of human life attainable by the grace of God Himself. Is it the gratitude of the devotees towards God?

Lord Krishna took trouble to save the humiliation of one Draupadi, today millions of ladies are being humiliated. Further, to save the life of one elephant, Lord Vishnu ran barefooted, today millions of cows are slaughtered daily for meals, with the first ray of the rising sun. The righteousness, faith in God and His worship, the Vedas, the functions of religious rituals, human character with behaviour, food, drinks, are today at the unimaginable and unprecedented low level, indescribable in words. The question is where is the incarnation of God now? All this proves practically the hollowness of the concept of incarnation.

The Vedas have a number of evidences to prove that God is unborn:

Rigveda 1.67.3: "The unborn (अज Aja) God is holding together the whole universe including the earth, the space, the sky and the luminous stars like the Sun"

Rigveda 6.50.14: "God is unborn and is so great that

the world is like his one footstep. O great God, listen to our prayers." Rigveda 7.35.3: "May Unborn God be gracious to us all, may the clouds of sky shower rains for our well being."

Yajurveda 40.8: "O human being! Worship God who is Omnipotent and devoid of any kind of body स्थूल, सूक्ष्म या कारण शरीर i.e. Sthoola, Sukshma or Kaarana Shareera. He is free from all the bondage of nerves or veins, is Omnipresent, all knowledgeable, he punishes the sinners, is Beginningless, eternal and has bestowed the knowledge of the Vedas. He and only He is adorable."

This brief logical discussion and a few of the numerous Vedic evidences given above clearly prove that God is unborn wholly and partially as well.

God does not incarnate and can never ever incarnate Himself, because He is all - pervading, Uniform, Undivided, Devoid of body-figure-color. He is formless, Omnipresent, Omniscient, and Omnipotent.

One wants to come down but for that the place should be vacant. For instance if we are on the first floor and want to come down by staircase, the same should be there and vacant, then only we can come down step by step. If we are above we cannot be down, and if we are below then we cannot be above at the same time. One who is finite imbodied with the conscious can come down and go up if there is place vacant.

God is Omnipresent that is all pervading and resides everywhere. There is no place in the Universe where God does not exit. Incarnation of God i.e. Him to come down from above. How is it possible? He is all pervading means He is immovable hence God's incarnation is impossible!

The soul is an infinitesimal entity hence it can move from one place to another or come down from up or in any direction. In Emancipation, the emancipated Soul can come down or go up anywhere in the universe with its will. Some times there is an extreme will of the embodied soul (Godly

person or Lord i.e. Bhagwan) to serve the common man even after death with grace of God. If it is embodied in the future e.g. the great soul like Lord Krishna who explains his most loveable disciple friend Arjuna in the Geeta:—

यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य ग्लानिर्भवति भारत।
अभ्युत्थानमधर्मस्य तदात्मानं सृजाम्यहम्॥

"Yadaa Yadaa Hi Dharmasya Glanirbhavati Bhaarata, Abhyutthaanamadharmasya Tadaatmaanam Srijyaamyaham". (*Geeta:* 4/7)

"Whenever there is decay of righteousness, O Bharata (O Arjuna)! And a rise of unrighteousness, then manifest myself, (with the grace of God) for the protection of the good, for the destruction of the wicked and for the establishment of righteousness, I am born in every age (If God permits me). Or O Bharata with the grace of God, if He permits me, "whenever there is decay of righteousness and a rise of unrighteousness, (it is my extreme wish) to be born on earth to protect the good, for the destruction of the wicked and for the establishment of righteousness".

Here it is clear that Shri Krishna was a human being not God. Human beings take birth, this is their incarnation with the grace of almighty God. But ordinary simpletons, ignorant people have misunderstood the meaning of the most popular Shloka of the Geeta (the epic of Hindu community), which is being misquoted by selfish gurus who want their disciples to worship them as God.

What is the purpose of God to get manifested in a human body? To kill some wicked-people (hundred or thousand or any number of demons). Why should God take births and get Himself embodied? How can He incarnate Himself? Never Ever! In modern times a single Hydrogen bomb can eliminate the lives of millions of people within no time. What are these nuclear devices for? For Scientific development or to kill mankind. Really speaking this is nothing but ignorance of man. God is Omniscient and Omnipotent and All-pervading. He does not have to go

anywhere. With the jerk of a second, he can destroy the whole universe. But God does not do that, because He is not ignorant like man.

"If anyone says that God incarnates for giving salvation to His devotees, it cannot be accepted, because if a devotee conducts virtuously and in accordance with the spiritual way enjoined, then alone he will attain salvation, not otherwise. Further a lot of examples can be cited to testify His infinite supreme power. There are innumerable activities of nature e.g. the vast sun, the phases of the moon, the cool mild breeze, the blossoming flowers of the loveliest nature, and birth of countless beings, with their growth and decay. Are all these not sufficient evidences to declare His Omnipotence? Several evidences may be cited of His all-knowledge from The Vedas, the revealed source of all true knowledge."

It would be against all logic to believe that God does take a human or other form and remains formless too. It is never possible to hold such diagonally opposite attributes together simultaneously nor it is understandably acceptable to a person with an open mind and reasoning. All the incarnations were subjected to suffering, pain and happiness in their lives, hence, by accepting such incarnations, God cannot be proved to be free from pain and pleasure. Their lives are full of changes, so God loses the attribute of being changeless (Avikaari). Further all incarnations grew old, so God like ordinary man also have to be conceived as decaying. Besides all the incarnations of God met with death. Shri Rama died by disappearing in the river Sarayu, Lord Krishna died by being shot by an arrow, and others also died in some or the other way. Being so how would it be possible to prove that He is immortal and imperishable?

Besides, many more evidences can be furnished to uphold that He is formless. But on the contrary, no Vedic mantra contains any such matter which may indicate that He has form or takes incarnations. Incarnation of God in the

form of fish, tortoise, pig, lion-headed human being and at last in human form cannot be proved by evidences of The Vedas or of logic. God is formless and it is the only conclusive acceptance."

The *Yajurveda:* (Chapter 40, mantra # 1) informs us that: "Isha Vaasyamidam Sarvam Yatkinchat Jagatyaam Jagat" which means "this Universe that we can see, and whatever exists in this, God pervades all this." It is clear to follow that when the Universe itself is infinite, God who is enveloping it must undoubtedly be infinite. Any religious concept that limits God or its fraction or its phase to any limitation or form, body or volume, surely contradicts the attribute of God being infinite, and therefore is totally against the Vedas and logic and hence is unacceptable. God is one without a second. In the Samaveda Mantra # 1355 it is also said, "there is no any agent of God means God is one."

There are following verses of the Atharvaveda XIII.4, 16 to 18, and 20 and 21 which say: there is neither a second, nor a third, nor a fourth, nor a sixth, nor a tenth God. He pervader the Universe and, therefore, it is also bound up with Him—there being a close connection between the pervader and the pervaded. He suffers all. He is one, one and one only. He is Omnipotent Being and is the only support of all the devtas, and Vasus etc., i.e. He supports them in their casual form even after the dissolution. The nine negative particles (in these verses) beginning with the ordinal second and ending with the zero (10th.) show that "God is one and one only and the Vedas most emphatically deny the existence of a second Deity. They affirm the existence of one God only and prohibit the worship of a second God. It also indicates that there can be no other God of the same or of a different genus, nor can there be a division in His essence".

"The Vedas declare God is "Unborn, Indivisible, Invisible, Formless" etc., and therefore, not subject to birth

and death and the necessity of incarnation. The doctrine of the incarnation of God cannot stand even the test of reasoning, for He, Who pervades the Universe like ether, is Infinite, Invisible, and is not susceptible to pleasure and pain, cannot be contained in a drop of semen or in the womb or in a bodily tenement." (*Light Of truth* XI)

"Coming into and going out can only be predicated of a finite being. To say that the Immobile Invisible God, Who pervades every particle of matter, can take on flesh is as absurd as it would be to assert that the son of a barren woman was married and her grandson was seen."—(*Light of truth* XI)

The Vedas have a number of evidences to prove that God is Unborn and can never incarnate:

This brief logical discussion and a few of the numerous Vedic evidences given above clearly prove that God is unborn wholly and partially as well and can never incarnate.

The Vedas contain numerous verses like those quoted above and the same cannot be quoted here for fear of increasing the bulk of the book.

Worship of God

Goodness is Godliness: Service of man is service to God: Religion of man is love: The Temple of God is within.

Musk forms in the navel of the deer. Being fascinated with its smell, the deer run hither and thither. They do not know where the fragrance comes from. Likewise God resides in the human body, but man does not know it. Therefore, he searches everywhere for bliss, not knowing that it is already in him.

Everyone worships God in his own way. "God is One" and according to the Vedas we (souls) are His eternal children, so there must be one procedure of His worship or prayer. Isn't it? We are human beings, the best species in the world because we are provided intellect to think and do whatever is right and to follow the path of perfection. God has given us His eternal knowledge and commandments i.e. 'the code of conduct' in the Holy Vedas. Still we don't receive His knowledge and follow His commandments / orders. Who is to suffer then?

इन्द्र वो विश्वतस्परि हवामहे जनेभ्यः।
अस्माकमस्तु केवलः॥

"Indra Vo Vishvataspari Havaamahe Janebhyah, Asmaakamastu Kewalah". (*Rigveda* 1-7-10)

In this Vedic Mantra God declares and teaches to all human beings : "Do not worship any other deities except me alone, because without me there exists no second God."

Hindus go to the Mandir, Muslims go to Masjid (Mosque) , Christians go to Churches and Sikhs go to Gurudwaras, then where is code of conduct and equality?

Some of us worship God near rivers and some go to worship Him on the top of a mountain, some in caves and some in the jungles. Some people worship God by keeping some artistically canvassed and/or imaginary pictures of what they call 'God's picture', in front of them. Some people pray to Him by keeping some attractive idol, in human form or any other form, made of clay or stone/marble/all types of metal etc. This is only show business. This shows that their elders (mother, father gurus, teachers' etc.) taught them different methods, which have resulted in differences among them.

It is said in the Basavarna: Vachan 820, "The rich build temples to Shiva, What shall, a poor man, do? O my Lord! My legs are the pillars, My torso, the Shine, and my head, the golden pinnacle! Things standing shall fall, but the moving ever shall stay."

There are many modes of worship of God as there are religions and religious sects. **

God has created men and now men create God in their own way. This is an insult to God and His teachings. Who is responsible? Who is to be blamed? Our ancestors, our parents, you or me or the man-made religions which we follow? Really speaking no one is responsible or to be blamed. Of course! We ourselves are responsible for all these un-religious things because we do not study and follow the correct path shown in our Divine literature. Now-a-days so called 'gurus' (commonly believed to be spiritual teachers) are the most popular in the field of religions, but sorry to say that no such Guru shows/teaches the correct path of worshipping real God. These gurus believe in 33,00,00,000 (thirty-three millions) deities or gods and do emphasize to believe in pictures of these imaginary gods.

Everyone, even a small illiterate child knows and believes that Almighty Omniscient God cannot take any form, shape or picture as He is formless and Omnipresent. It's a pity and a shameful act for these gurus who preach and make people believe and make them more ignorant when

they preach that God can incarnate Himself. An artist makes insensate imaginary idols/statues from mud and stones for artistic showpiece purpose and people buy them, garland them, clothe them, glorify them and lastly worship these idols/statues as God. Even these so-called gurus inspire these people to do so. Its advisable for these so-called gurus to stop all these selfish acts and go back to their own gurus and/or study the correct teachings of worshipping the Omnipresent, Omniscient and Omnipotent God.

As mentioned earlier, God is formless and can never be seen with fleshy eyes hence there is no picture of God. Everyone knows that hunger, thirst, pain, pleasure, love etc are just feelings and no one can shoot their photographs or draw their pictures on paper. All these things are to be felt by the heart and mind by internal and external senses and experienced by the self, but cannot be described in words.

Human soul very well knows that God is Formless, Just, Omnipresent, Omniscient and Omnipotent, so why waste time to keep all these dead-inert-stony idols, photos and pictures of imaginary humans, etc. in place of the Supreme God. That is main reason that one cannot meditate properly and experiences difficulty whilst concentrating on the form of God.

God is Self-existence, Intelligence and Bliss personified. He is devoid of any form[27], Omnipotent, Just, Merciful, Benevolent, Eternal, Infinite, Unchangeable, Beginningless, Incomparable, Support of all, Lord of all, Omnipresent, Omniscient i.e. Controller of all from within, Undecaying, Imperishable, Fearless, Eternal, Holy and Creator, Sustainer and Destroyer of the Universe. He is one without a second. To Him alone worship is always due.

न तस्य प्रतिमाऽअस्ति यस्य नाम महद्यशः

"Na Tasya Pratima~Asti Yasya Naama Mahadyashah"

(Yajurveda 32-3)

This is an important Vedic Mantra which clears many doubts, blind-faiths, blind-beliefs and misunderstandings

from ignorant man's flickering mind and clarifies that "there is no photo, picture or idol of the God who is the greatest of all. He is infinite. Until and unless ignorance-like-dirt is not removed from the mirror of the mind, His visualization is not possible. God is not a thing to be seen with fleshy eyes neither He is the thing to be experienced with any senses, because He is formless by His nature and can be experienced only by the soul with a pure and clean mind. In other words God is visualized in the heart of a Yogi.[28]

Kathopanishada 2.22 says: that "Among all bodies, God is devoid of body (and is formless)".

Kathopanishada 2.24 says "The Supreme Soul (God) is not obtained by eloquent speeches, nor by intellect or brain power (or arguments), nor by much listening (of sermons or Holy Scriptures). But only he whom this Supreme Soul chooses, obtains (knows or realises) Him, and for him He illumines His real form."

Kathopanishada 3.12 says "The Supreme Secret Soul existing in all things and beings is not illuminated or seen by the physical eyes, but can be seen only by the seers of subtle and keen intellect."

Consciousness is experienced by conscious entity, hence God's bliss is to be experienced and enjoyed only by the soul. What is experienced in meditation by the soul with communion of God is called "the visualization of God". That experience or God's bliss cannot be described in words in any language.

Rigveda 8.72.3: says "The learned persons have His enlightenment in soul. He cannot be described, as the taste of a fruit cannot be narrated in words."

The gross substances are the subjects of senses, but in these too ether (आकाश Akasha) which is so minute that it is not visualised by these senses, because they are the subjects of subjective-mind (अन्तःकरण Antah-Karan). In essence both God and soul are conscious entities and in nature both are

pure, formless, immortal and virtuous. The relation between God and soul is pervading and pervaded.

Rigveda 8.69.11: says "God is glorious, symbolless, formless, conscious and source of all happiness."

Yajurveda: 32. 3: says "The Formless Supreme Spirit that pervades the Universe can have no material representation, likeness or image"

"It is clear therefore that idol-worship is interdicted in the Vedas and the Shastras. Without Divine Knowledge the attainment of God's Bliss is not possible. Whatever benefits acrue to a man proceed from association with the learned, study of their biographies and perusal of their books (and not from the worship of their statues). If you merely look at the image of a person and know nothing about his qualities, you are not inspired with affectionate reverence for him. It is the knowledge of his good qualities alone which inspires that feeling. Evil practices like idol worship are responsible for the existence of millions of idle, lazy, indolent, and beggarly priests in India, who are mainly answerable for this widespread ignorance, fraud and mendacity in the country". (*Satyarth Prakash:* Chapter 11)

N. B.—The great souls are called Godly persons, or lord, viz. Shri Ramchandra Maharaja, Shri Krishna Maharaja, Lord Buddha, etc., the great sages like Mahar'shi Dayananda, Vyasa, Patanjali, Kanad, Kapila and Gemini etc. are also called gods or lords, but no one accepts them as God. Whoever with pure soul, pure heart can be called as living gods such as saints, sages, spiritual masters, true Yogis, great kings' etc.

Mostly people misunderstand the difference between "Ishwar and Bhagwan". Only God is called as "Ishwara". Rishi Parashurama, a great Vedic authority, has defined the term Bhagwan as:

ऐश्वर्यस्य समग्रस्य धर्मस्य यशसः।
ज्ञान वैराग्योश्चैव शासनं भग इतींरणा॥

"Aishvaryasya Samagrasya Dharmasya Yashasah,

Jyaana Vairaagyoshchaiva Shashnam Bhaga Iteerarnaa".

(Vishnu puran: 6-5-74)

means "Bhagwan is the one who possesses completely the six following opulences or qualities such as—1: Full wealth, 2: Dharma, 3: Fame, 4: Beauty, 5: Knowledge, and 6: Renunciation. All these attributes are called 'Bhagas' and Bhagwan means the possessor of all the six attributes. Among ordinary persons it is, perhaps possible for a few to possess one, or at the most two or three, of these qualities to a large extent, but only some can possess all six of them.

Maryada Purushottam Shri Ram and Yogeshwara Shri Krishna both were exceptional personalities who possessed all the abovesaid qualities hence they are called as "Bhagwan" or Lord.

Lord Krishna says in the Geeta: -

बहूनि मे व्यतीतानि जन्मानि तव चार्जुन।
तान्यहं वेद सर्वाणि न त्वं वेत्य परन्तप॥

"Bhooni Me Vyateetaani Janmaani Tava Chaarjuna, Taanyaham Veda sarvaani Na Twam Vetya Parantapa".

(Geeta 4-5)

which mean "Many births of mine have passed as well as yours, O Arjuna! I know them all but you know them not, O Parantapa (scorcher of foes), I know them by virtue of Yoga." By this quotation it is clear and proved that great lord, as Krishna was a human being, who also was in the circle of birth and death. If God is believed to take birth or a part of God that is to be believed incarnated then He (God) becomes like a human being and has to experience pain and pleasure as we do. But God is Eternal, Undivided, Unperisheable, Unborn, Undecaying, and Unchangeable. He is One and only one who is the Creator, Sustainer and Dissolver of the universe. If granted God is to be infinitesimal entity, then creation of the universe is impossible. No lord or godly person can possess God's attribute-nature and characteristics.

God is Formless:

1. Conscious elements do not possess any form or color or place, hence they cannot be seen. God being conscious can only be realised or experienced by the soul who is also conscious.

न तस्य प्रतिमाऽअस्ति

"Na Tasya Pratima-Asti" (Yajurveda: 32-3) i.e. "There is no picture of God."

अकाय

"Akaaya" (Yajurveda: 40.8) means, "God is devoid of any form."

2. Being the subtlest element, God cannot be seen. (*Rigveda* 1-187-70)

3. God is All-pervading (सर्वव्यापक Sarva-Vyapaka) like ether, hence how can He be seen? He is Omnipresent.

आ यास्तस्थौ भुवनान्यमर्त्यो

"Aa Yastasthau Bhuvanaanyamartyah"

(Rigveda 9-84-2)

4. God is the creator of the Universe. His creation springs out from within (Sarva-Antaryami). To collect atoms, to unite them and to create the Universe is the work of Omniscient, Omnipresent and Omnipotent God, who is Formless hence invisible.

एको दाधार भुवनानि विश्वा

"Eko Daadhaara Bhuvanaani Vishwaa"

(Rigveda 1-154-4)

5. The attribute of ether is word which is not to be seen likewise God's natural attribute is "Bliss" that is not to be seen, but can be experienced by the soul. Hence Blissful God is Formless and invisible. (सवर्यस्य च केवलम् *"Swaryasya Cha Kevalam"*)

6. The substance that is either very close or very far cannot be seen, God is within the soul and all pervading, hence cannot be seen with fleshy eyes.

विष्णोः कर्माणि पश्यत

"Vishnoho Karmaani Pashyata" (Rigveda 1-22-19)

यस्मिन्विश्वानि भुवनानि तस्थुः

"Yasmin Vishwani Bhuvnani Tasthuhu"

(*Rigveda* 10-82-6)

7. Fleshy eyes can see only gross substances, but God being Conscious entity, cannot be seen with these fleshy eyes. God is "Sat-Chit-Anand Swaroop" i.e. He is Self-Existence, consciousness and blissfulness personified.

8. All things that are seen with fleshy eyes are born/created hence perishable (Nirvikara). God is Unborn, Eternal hence imperishable, hence invisible.

9. The thing which has form occupies space (place) i.e. it is finite, but God is infinite (Ananta), all pervading, does not occupy space so He is invisible and formless.

ओ३म् खं ब्रह्म

"OM Kham Brahama" (Yajurveda: 40-17)

पूर्णात् पूर्णमुदुच्यति परिषिच्यते

"Purnat Purnamuduchyati Parishichyate"

(Atharvaveda: 10-8-29)

10. God is Un divisible, Unchangeable (Nirvikara) and complete, God is totally devoid of any shape or form and free from all types of bondage and deformations, including deformations caused by birth, death and therefore His attribute is unchangeable. Hence He is invisible and immovable.

अकायमव्रणम्

"Akaayamavranam" (Yajurveda: 40-8). God is immovable, but whole Universe is movable with His inspiration.

तदेजति तन्नेजति

"Tadejati Tannejati" (Yajur Veda: 40-5)

अनाद्यनन्तं महतः परम ध्रुवम्

"Anaadyanantam Mahatah Parama Dhruvam"

(Kathopanishada)

means that God is immovable. The thing, which is All-pervading is immovable.

11. In the Vedic philosophy God is also known as "Parmam Vyaoma" means He is All-pervading and envelopes even ether i.e. the ether is also within His limit.

त्वमस्य पारे रजसो व्योम्नः

"Twamasya Paare Rajaso Vyomanah"

(Rigveda 1.52.12).

means that God is greater than ether and He is all pervading in all directions? He is End-less hence complete and unchangeable, formless and invisible.

12. If fleshy eyes are damaged or if there is no proper light outside, nothing is visible. Likewise, If our inner - instrument of vision (the mind) is dirty or if there is no proper light of wisdom (knowledge), God is not visible. God is visible (experienced by the soul) when the dirt of ignorance is removed from the mind, when the mind becomes pure and clean.

13. He is Unborn (Anaadi) {(Samaveda 5.2.1; 1.1.22)} and End-less (Amar) {(Rigveda 4.1.1; 5.14.2)}, hence God is invisible.

The most important thing that should be borne in mind is that prayer does not require any religious place. All that is needed is clarity of mind, purity of intention and deep heartfelt sincerity. The whole universe is God's creation and whole earth is a religious place because God is Omnipresent and pervades everywhere.

One more thing, which many people ask frequently, is that "Should we meditate or pray when we are ill". The answer is one and that is Yes! Why not to pray? It is the body that is ill, not the soul. Meditation is an essential food for the soul. Everyone has full right to meditate on God in any condition. In sickness or while travelling, one can pray to God or remember His name. Of course! You are allowed

even in lying down position to worship God. "Man considers the action but God weighs the intention."

The Vedic theory accepts that God is our Mother, Father, Brother, Guru, Friend, etc. In this world also we come across all relations such as Mother, Father, Brother/ Sister, Guru, Friend, and Judge etc. In other words God has given such a nice opportunity to understand these relationships. As we respect and obey our Mother, Father etc., in the same way we should respect and obey God and treat Him as our Mother and Father and then observe the reaction. As we talk with our friends freely so why not talk with our Real Friend (God). We should not fear from God and hide anything from Him because only He is our well-wisher. Mind one thing that all worldly relationships are temporary except God whose relationship as mother, father, friend etc, is permanent. He is always with us, within us. He knows everything then why should we hide anything from Him?

God is the biggest Judge. Worldly Judge can make mistakes in his judgements but our God Father Judge is Omniscient (All knowing) hence be cautious before doing anything wrong. He does not forget or forgive our sins. He has to punish the guilty and reward the obedient ones and no one can escape from His Judgement.

* One must have noticed that when we do something wrong and at that very moment, feeling of fear, doubt, shame and distrust rises in the self consciousness and when we do something really good, then surely we experience feelings of fearlessness, courage and satisfaction within ourselves. These feelings are prompted not from the human soul, but by the Divine Spirit (from God). We all humans have limited knowledge hence we are imperfect by nature, so we make mistakes and because of desires we do sins, but God always stops us from doing anything wrong and inspires us in good deeds. Fear, Doubt, Shamefulness and distrust are the signals and/or warnings from God for not to

do the wrongful things and satisfaction or felicity, Undoubtfulness and fearlessness or courage are the blessings from all-knowing Omnipresent God who inspire us to do the good things. Of-course God is man's real friend and all worldly friends are selfish, because man is born with selfishness by nature. It is said that when we pray to God after doing all possible efforts and with pure mind, God responds to our prayer. Some people say that God is our heavenly father and stays in heaven and other people say that God resides on third/fifth/seventh sky etc. If God is one and Omnipresent, Omniscient, then He cannot stay in one place. In other words He resides everywhere. *"Ishaa Vaasyamidam Sarvam"* (*Yajurveda* 40/1) means God resides in this whole Universe. On the other hand we (Souls) being an infinitesimal entity resided in one place (Atharvaveda 19-68), whereas God is all pervading. Now an important question can arise here : "then how and where can we meet God or visualize Him?" The Vedas give the answer.

Worship of God is not so hard as we think, on the contrary, it is the easiest thing to realise and visualize Him. We (the soul) reside in the body (in heart*) and God resides everywhere means He already resides in our hearts within our souls. Now if we do have self-spiritual power and full faith in God and of course have the correct knowledge about the Trinity, it becomes very easy to meet the Omnipresent God and experience His presence and Bliss within us. Each and every breath we take is because of Him. He is always awake and protects us whilst we are asleep at night. He is our Guide, the Greatest Guru. It is our Dharma (duty) to observe His attributes, characteristics and natures and acquire the same as many as we can and behave accordingly in our life. Then see the results. You will feel eternal pleasure or Bliss of God and that cannot be expressed in words. You will be a different person, an enlightened person and feel real freedom. True Knowledge, True Action and True Worship lead to the Renunciation of all worldly desires that make the

man perfect and opens the way to God which is the real destination of man and goal of human life. Only after this stage when man leaves this world, enjoys emancipation for a period of 31,10,40,000000000 years without any pain and experiences only real happiness i.e. Bliss of God.

It is a fact that truth, compassion, love, honesty, brotherhood evolution etc. are the things restricted to literature and intellectual pursuits. But the gap between ideology and practice must be reduced to become aware of the ultimate reality of human existence. Spirituality is different and difficult from religion. In religion there are certain rules to follow, but in spirituality one is connected to the natural-self. Spirituality is nothing but the actualization of the self that is the soul. Conceptualization has to be channelized into practice then only one gains and achieves the result. Gaining knowledge is an essential thing and fruits of that knowledge are reaped when the doer applies that knowledge into action, and that is spirituality. Spirituality is not something to be created or discovered. It simply exists. Spirituality is the natural inner power, which can be realised by being truthful. To be connected is to be on a permanent high. A divine life on earth need not be an exclusive thing. The divine is already there within us. Evolution is always towards light. The true nature of divinity exists in love, knowledge, power and bliss. And true spirituality is its natural manifestation. This is truth. This is the method of actualization of Gyana, Karma and Upasana to get results.

The best way to worship God is to perform all our duties according to the Vedic Dharma. Service to humanity is the best service to God. All actions should be performed in conformity with Dharma, that is, after due consideration of right and wrong.

The real Guru (Sadguru)

Now-a-days everyone runs after this guru or that guru and even gurus run after their 'Chelaas' (so-called - disciples) so that their own materialistic desires can be fulfilled. Everybody likes health, wealth and happiness and dislikes diseases, poverty and misery. Everyone wants money, money and more money, so people run after one another to grab money. It is in their mind that money* can buy everything but sorry to say it is not fully correct. People go to their gurus to get their blessings and intention behind blessing is only acquiring easy money without doing any hard work. On the other hand these gurus also keep contacts with their wealthy 'Chelaas' for them to arrange huge public programmes, so that he also gains from those public programmes (gatherings) and reaps monetary benefits. These gurus sell their knowledge collected from various religious books and those chelaas pay (in Daan Petee i.e. collection boxes) for listening to the gurus, lectures (not discourses) and time pass.

Pure happiness lies in spirituality, which lies within. But no one is really after spirituality.

Its true that money plays very important role in human lives and can buy all worldly materialistic things, which are also a necessity but one cannot buy everything with it. One cannot buy intellect, knowledge, happiness and peace of mind, which are non-materialistic thing i.e. spiritual things with money. These spiritualistic things can be acquired with true knowledge, practice and experience. For all these things, one has to adore a real guru who is really worthy of being a "Spiritual Guru".

"God is the Guru (teacher) of even the most ancient

teachers. He is immortal. Time cannot influence Him." (Yoga Darshana: Samaadhi Pada # 26). The teacher of all-true knowledge and learning who revealed the word of salvation (i.e. the Veda) in the beginning of the world, the teacher of even all the early teachers. He is immortal.

The syllable 'Gu' means darkness, the syllable 'Ru' means dispeller; he is therefore called a 'guru' because he dispels nescience like darkness from his disciples and guides the path of light like knowledge.

Definition of Guru:

* Anyone who is attributed with good attributes can be called a teacher. One who teaches is called a teacher, a Master or a Guru*".

* He who gives the knowledge of the Vedas and performs Vedic righteous rituals is called a teacher.

* The teacher is he who knows the Eternal Wisdom, the Veda, who is devoted to the All-Pervader 'Vishnu', who knows not arrogance, who knows the method of Yoga, ever stands upon Yoga and has become Yoga itself; who is pure, who is devoted to his teachers and who has witnessed the Supreme Person, 'Purusha'. He who possesses all these virtues is called a 'Dispeller of Darkness', a guru.

* Manu Smriti 2.149, says "He who confers the benefit of the Veda on any one, be it little or be it much, he (the disciple) should know him to be here his Guru, by reason of that benefit through the Veda."

* A Guru or teacher is a guide who leads one from the darkness like ignorance to the light like knowledge and also who leads one to the path of truth from untruth.

* According to the Indian culture there are four Gurus: mother is the first Guru of a man and then comes father, teacher and learned person as his masters. Mother and father are the creater of this physical body but the teacher provides intellect hence he is called "teacher."

* "As his father and mother beget him mutually out of

lust, one should know that (birth to be merely) his cause of existence, when he is born from the womb."

(Manusmiriti: 2.147)

* "But the birth which the teacher who has completed the Veda, duly brings about for him by the "Gayatri", that is the true (birth), free from old age, eternal.

(Manusmriti: 2.148)

* "Everybody's father is called the "Guru" since he brings up the baby right from the time of injecting sperm in the ovum to supplying daily needs after birth. The one who dispels the darkness born of ignorance from human heart by giving the light of truth is also called a "Guru" or an "Aacharya". (Aryoddeshyaratnamaalaa)

* It is a saying "No master—No goal". It is true without a teacher no one gets the proper and true knowledge even when one studies by himself. The teacher helps to improve knowledge hence better to have a Guru. The Guru always wants to improve the career of his disciples.

True knowledge is one that gives the true knowledge of God, by which the soul visualises* God. (*God's bliss is experienced with the true knowledge within the soul.)

God bestows the Vedas, and thus God is the original source of all knowledge. Manu says in Manu Smriti: 2.7 that the Vedas contain all knowledge.

Categories of teachers:

There are three categories of teachers:

(1) School teacher (2) Principal, and (3) Spiritual teacher or Master.

1: **School teacher:** He is the creator of pupils' character, gives knowledge of new directions in new subjects, develops his intellect so that he is able to think. For evidence:

आचार्यः कस्मात्? आचार्य आचरं गृह्याति आचिनोति अर्थन् आचिनोति, बुद्धिमति वा।

"Aacharyah Kasmat? Aacharya Aacharam Grahayati Aachinoti Arthan Aachinoti. Bhuddhimiti Vaa"

(Nirukta 1-4-12)

2: **Principal:** He gives the knowledge of the Vedas or some parts of the Vedas to his pupil (disciple) and takes fee from him in return for his personal expenditure. Here is a proof:

एक देशं तु वेदस्य वेदाङ्गान्यपि वा पुनः।
योऽध्यापयति वृत्त्यर्थमुपाध्यायः सः उच्यते॥

"Eka Desham Tu Vedasya Vedangaanyapi Vaa Punah, Yo-Dhyaapayati Vrittyarthamupaadhyaayah Sah Uchyate" (Manusmriti 2.141)

"But he is called sub-teacher (Upaadhyaaya) who for (his) livelihood teaches a single portion of the Veda, or again the Vedangas.")

3: Spiritual teacher or master: He is the third category of teacher who goes to his disciple's house and performs rituals according to the teachings of the Vedas and also looks after the Gurukulas i.e. houses of teachers or schools.

After a long period of time and because of their deep heart-felt respect, all types of teachers are called "Guru". The term Guru is defined as: —

* He who is attributed with good qualities is called a Guru.
* Learned one worthy of worshipping is also called a Guru.
* He who provides the knowledge of the Vedas is called a Guru.
* He who teaches any type of knowledge is called a Guru.
* Even he who gives a little knowledge is called a Guru. [Manusmriti 2.149]
* He who dispels darkness-like ignorance is called a Guru. [Girati Sinchati Karnayorjyaanaamritam Iti Guruhu]
* He who preaches the deep doctrine of the Vedas is

called a guru.

* He who explains the laws of sciences is called a Guru. [Gaarayate Vijyaapayati Shastrarahasyam Iti Guruhu]

The meaning of abovesaid in short is that the Guru is one from whom any kind of (Para or Apara) knowledge is acquired. And true master (sat-Guru) is one who teaches the knowledge of the Vedas. He is Sat-Guru who leads his disciples towards truth and repels untruth from their lives. He, who takes away ignorance, removes darkness, shows his disciples the path of salvation, and enlightens their lives with the light of knowledge, is really a true teacher i.e. true spiritual master.

गुरुर्ब्रह्मा गुरुर्विष्णु गुरुर्देवो महेश्वरः।
गुरुः साक्षात् परम् ब्रह्म तस्मै श्रीगुरवे नमः॥

"Gururbrahama Gururvishnurgururdevo Maheshwarah,
Guruhu Saakshaat Param Brahma Tasmai Shrigurv Namah"

The above said verse is very popular in the Hindu philosophy, in which the Guru is considered as Lord, because of his virtuous attributes, characteristics and nature and his great duties towards human society. One thing here to be borne in mind is that any guru or Sat-guru is not God or can never ever become like God.

God is the Greatest Guru of all our ancestor gurus, because He only gives the true knowledge of all subjects to man in the beginning of the creation of the universe.

(Yoga Darshan: Samaadhi Pada 26)

According to the Vedic theory: Mother, Father and learned teaches i.e. spiritual masters are called and treated as Gurus according to their positions. There can be hundreds of Gurus as there are many vast fields for knowledge to acquire. No Guru can have the full knowledge of all fields.

The greatest sage of the modern era, Maharshi Dayananda Saraswati in his well-known work "Introduction

to the commentaries on the Rigveda etc." explains: " The Vedas contain two kinds of knowledge. One is 'Aparaa' i.e. physical sciences, and the other is 'Paraa' or spiritual knowledge." The Aparaa Vidyaa or physical science is that which studies physical material from a grass blade to the universe and deals with the qualities of matter or nature, and to employ them to make scientific inventions by their proper use.

The second Paraa Vidyaa (Spiritual knowledge) deals with the attainment of the Eternal-indestructible Almighty God.

This spiritual knowledge is superior to the physical knowledge, because the final aim of physical knowledge is to gain efficiency in the spiritual knowledge. The preview of the spiritual knowledge covers the study of the Almighty God—the creater of the universe. Material knowledge covers the study of the universe, nature and cause of the creation and maintenance of the universe.

अन्धंतमः प्रविंशन्ति येऽविद्यामुपासते।
ततो भूयाऽइव ते तमोऽय विद्याया रतः॥

"Andhantamah Pra Vinshanti Ye-Vidyaamupaaste,
Tato Bhooya-Iva Te Tamo Ya-U Vidyaayaa Rataha."
(*Yajurveda:* 40/12)

which means there are two kinds of knowledge: One study of the matter called Avidyaa or Aparaa and other study of spiritual world called Vidyaa or Paraa. Knowledge of both is essential for Liberation i.e. Salvation.

Now-a-days people are more attracted towards Avidyaa i.e. physical science, but true knowledge of the Vedas leads towards inner knowledge of the soul and Super soul.

अविद्या मृत्युं तीर्त्वा विद्ययामृतमश्नुति

"Avidyaayaa Mrityum Teertvaa Vidyayaa-
Mritamashnute" (Yajurveda: 40/14)

विनाशेन मृत्युं तीर्त्वा सम्भूत्यामृतमश्नुने

"Vinaashena Mritym Teertvaa Sambhoottya-Mritamashnute" (*Yajurveda:* 40/11)

which means from Avidyaa man can acquire material knowledge and from Vidyaa i.e. the knowledge of the spiritual world, one is emancipated from bondage of birth and death and gets salvation.

The Veda is the only book on earth that deals with 'Paraa' (Esoteric or Spiritual) as well as 'Aparaa' (Exoteric or Worldly) sciences.

* Great Devrishi Narada has said—"It is useless to study by own self, it is like a lady bearing a child without her husband. So it is necessary for one to have true teacher under whose guidance he gets the proper knowledge".

(*Narada Parasharamadhaviya:* Part 1 page # 154)

स गुरुर्याः क्रियं कृत्वा वेदमस्मै प्रयच्छति

"Sa Gurooryah Kriyam Kritvaa Vedamasmai Prayachchhati" (Kathopanishada: 2/8)

which means the teacher is essential to acquire proper knowledge. The Upanishad states that "A student should acquire the knowledge from a teacher who has educational knowledge of the Vedas."

तद्धिज्ञानार्थ स गुरुमेवाभिगच्छेत् समित्पानिः श्रेत्रियं ब्रह्मनिश्थम्

"Taddhijyaanaarth Sa Gurumevaabhigachchhet Samitpaanihi Shretriyam Brhamanishtham"

(Mandukopanishada: 1-1-12)

Now refer this Atharva Vedic Mantra which explains about the gurus:

आचार्यो मृत्युवरुणः सोम औषधयो पयः।
जीमूता आसन्सत्वानः तैरिदं स्वराभिर्तम्॥

"Aacharyo Mriyuvarunah Soma Oshadhayo Payah,
Jeemoota Aasantsatvaanah Tairidam Swaraabhritam"

(Atharvaveda: 11-5-14)

It means that the Guru is rigid like death (Mrityu) and pure like air (Varuna), which removes all kinds of impurities and gives good attributes to his students. The Guru is also like "Soma" i.e. medicine and drink, the deep meaning of that is to have control on senses like speech, touch, vision, taste and smell by which life is enriched with noble attributes and the student always lives a happy, disciplined and peaceful life.

स एष पूर्वेषामपि गुरुः कालेनाऽनवच्छेदात्

"Sa Esha Poorveshaamapi Guruhu
Kaalanaanavachchhedat"

(Yoga Shastra: Samaadhi Pada 26)

It means "As in the present time we become enlightened only after being taught by our teachers, so were in the beginning of the world, Agni and the other three Rishis (sages), taught by the Greatest of all teachers—God."

The true master is one who improves inner-consciousness of his disciples and leads them from darkness of ignorance to the light of knowledge. (In philosophical point of view darkness is the symbol of ignorance and light is the symbol of knowledge and that is why God is said to be illuminated i.e. Omniscient). Hence it is essential to have a teacher i.e. the Guru.

Glimpse of 'Guru':

It is beneficial for one to follow the teachings of his Guru than merely to have a glimpse of him. One can experience enthusiasm and peace of mind by vision of his Guru and can be inspired by his personality, but it is a total blind faith just to have Glimpse/Darshana of any spiritual master and believe that all his/her worries and evils will be washed away. If it is so then what about "Karma Philosophy?

It is purposeful and beneficial to listen carefully to the Guru's preaching, to think and to understand his sayings, to obey his guidance, to practice his teachings etc. if his

teachings are according to the teachings of the Vedas.

The spiritual master is a guide of his disciples to show them the path of righteousness. Disciples also perform their duties to follow the path shown by their Guru. Guru only guides us but to believe that Guru will take us to the other shores of the worldly sea of pain and sorrow is wrong. One has to practise, meditate and do actions for himself to get the rewards. There are many disciples who believe and say that their Guru will take their burden on his head. So we are safe in his shadow. That is a wrong thinking. May God give them some intelligence to understand the Karma-Phal.

Deeds will not be done automatically by just looking at Guru's picture or his photo or worshipping his statue. Pity on these ignorant simpleteous disciples! It is the paramount duty of a disciple to obey and respect his master and that is the real worship of his Guru. Doing nothing and just looking at the Guru is useless and waste of precious time of this priceless life. It is a fraud and blind faith, which is non-beneficial and only ruins one's life.

It is a wise advice to all that they listen to their master's voice, his preaching, his advices, his orders and follow them accordingly in their daily life. Then only one gets rid of pain and sorrow automatically. No Spiritual masters misguide their disciples. Service of the True Master can not be performed/completed by just giving him money in cash or by giving him precious gifts. Real service of the Guru lies in obeying and following his true teachings in practical life.

Frequently Asked Question: Is it correct to obey all Gurus' orders even if he is wrong?

This is really a tricky and inquisitive question! Yes! Disciples should obey their Guru's orders or Commandments whatever he says If there is no controversy in his commandments compared to the teachings of the Vedas.

Of course! One should try to obey all the true teachings of his Guru. If there is even a little doubt, indecision,

mistaken notion or objection in mind, it's the first duty of that disciple to clarify his/her doubt with the guru before following anything. Even after, if he/she is not fully satisfied with those answers then he/she must ask any learned Vedic scholar to remove his/her doubts or study the Vedas for truer knowledge. The Vedas are the scriptures of all true knowledge. It is the paramount duty of inquisitive, sensible, disciplined disciples to have the Question-Answer session with his Guru regularly and/or whenever required. It is prime duty for everyone (even Gurus and disciples) to study the Vedas and the Vedic literatures because the Vedas are self-authoritative (Axiomatic i.e. *Swatah Pramana* or *Self-Proof*) and theosophy to be believed and known.

Guru is just a master, teacher or guide but not God:

A Guru is just a learned human being and a master who teaches/guides his students/ disciples, whereas God is the Greatest Master of all masters. No human being can ever reach the position of God hence for guru at anytime becoming like God is out of Question. No deity, guru, sat-guru, saint, mystic, spiritual master, great soul, sage etc. can ever acquire the highest level of the Supreme Soul, hence no guru can be compared with God as He is Supreme and Omnipresent, Omniscient and Omnipotent.

न जातो न जनिष्यत।

"Na Jaato Na Janishyata" (Rigveda 7-32-23)

means "No one can become like God and can ever do so."

न त्वामिन्द्राति रिच्यते

"Na Tvaamindraati Richyate" (Rigveda 8-92-22)

means "O GOD! None is greater than You."

नकिरेवा यथा त्वम्

"Nakirevaa Yathaa Twam" (Rigveda 4-30-1)

means "No one is like You."

नकिरिन्द्र त्वदुत्तरो न ज्यायाँ अस्ति वृत्रहन्

"Nakirindra Twaduttaro Na Jyaayaam Asti Vritrahan"
(Rigveda 4-30-1)
means "No one is greater than You or be ever so."

Besides these there are many eloquent hymns in the Vedas that show that God is the greatest of all and is second to none. No soul can ever reach the greatest position or can never be equal to the Supreme Soul.

अल्लाह हो अकबर

"Allah Ho Akber" (Holy Quran)
means "God is the Greatest of All."

"God is Great." (Holy Bible)

एकोंङ्कार सतनाम

"Ek Onkar Satnaama" (Guru Granth Sahib)
means God is one who is the Greatest".

The Soul cannot be God and God cannot become like the soul, both are separate entities and hence cannot be dissolved into each other, even if God desires so. "All these animate beings possess the power of desire, feeling of pleasure and pain and capacity, more or less, of thinking and making efforts instinctively as well as thought-out. This power which makes animate to function is called soul or Atma.

The relationship between God and soul is that God is the pervading force in the soul, God is worshipped, the soul is the worshipper; God is father, soul is like His son; God awards judicious fruits to soul for his right or wrong doings. Nature and soul are infinite and beginning-less or eternal by alternation of universe and deluge, and of creation or decay in universe in case of nature; and by death of body and re-birth in case of soul."

How is it possible for a soul to become like God or become God? It is foolishness even to think like that. Infinitesimal (Guru) cannot be finite (God) because all-pervading finite entity is only One, not many.

The guru himself practices Yoga, meditation and makes efforts to acquire bliss of God. How can these types

of beliefs come in the mind of disciples? Guru is a human being. Guru has all the attributes of the soul. The only specialty in him is that he is greater than ordinary people. He guides them for their betterment because he himself has acquired the bliss of God through meditation. To worship a Guru in place of God (or one to be worshipped as God) is the greatest sin. No other sin is greater than this. God is second to none.

न जातो न जनिष्यते

"Na Jaato Na Janishyate" (Rigveda 7-32-23)

means "No one is greater than God and / or become like God."

नही निवस्य प्रतिमानमस्त्यन्तर्जातेषूत ये जनित्वाः

"Nahi Nivasya Pratima Namastyantarjaateshot Ye Janitva" (Rigveda 4-18-4)

i.e. No one is equal to God.

नास्य शत्रुर्न प्रतिमानमस्ति न प्रतिष्ठिः पुरुमायस्य सह्योः

"Nasya Shatrurna Pratimanamsti Na Pratishthihi Purumaysya Sahyoho" (Rigveda 6-18-12)

which means "God has no enemy and no one is equal to Him."

"O eternal God! No one is like you except you."

(*Rigveda* 6-21-10)

They are many Holy Hymns that readers can decide and clear these kind of Quests that no Guru can ever be worshipped in place of God or as God. May God give all seekers of true knowledge and inquisitive disciples, courage to accept truth and renounce whatever is false.

Q.: "Is it right to believe as taught/preached by many famous Saints, Spiritual masters, Gurus and elders that "numerous numbers of souls are the parts/ parcels/pieces/portions or divisions of the Supreme Soul i.e. God"?

A.: The Vedic teaching does not agree to this concept

that innumerous (eternal) souls are the part of (eternal God. There are many proofs in The Vedas that that show that the soul is everlasting, imperishable, immortal and eternal entity.

It is a limit of human intellect! One thing is to be kept in mind that Chetana i.e. Conscious thing cannot be broken into pieces. Anything, which is divided into two or more pieces, cannot be eternal. In simple words anything that changes its status cannot be eternal. God and soul both are conscious and separate entities, hence both cannot be united or broken. Remember what Bhagwan Shri Krishna had said in the Geeta—

नैनं छिन्दन्ति शस्त्राणि, नैनं दहति पावकः।
न चैनं क्लेदयन्त्यापो, न शोषयति मारुतः॥

"Nainam Chhindanti Shastraani, Nainam Dahati Pavakah, Na Chainam Kledayantyaapo, Na Shoshayati Maarutah" *(Geeta 2-23)*

means the soul is eternal, hence any weapon cannot cut it, fire cannot burn it, water cannot dissolve it and air cannot dry or evaporate it". This must be borne in mind that —A thing that is created must perish, but the soul is uncreated so it is imperishable

Is it clear? When a soul can never be cut into pieces by anything then how these grown up enlightened intelligent people cannot understand this simple theory? What would you say about this popular quotation of the Geeta?

God is Eternal, Non-divisible (Akhand), without any defects, then how, why and what can make Him into pieces and who is responsible for that? Really speaking, this mischievous and misguiding theory is made by some selfish, lazy, egoistic and atheist people who have no self-knowledge or spiritual-knowledge and do not want to accept the truth. They create imaginary stories about our ancient deities and spread blind faith in the society and make simpleteous people more ignorant and fulfill their own worldly needs including wealth and money.

According to Vedas and A'rsha Granthas it is an objectionable and 100% wrong misguided quotation to believe that "soul is a part/piece/portion/division of Omnipresent God". God is One and non-divisional entity because He is Omnipresent. Disciple must ask for any proof from that Guru who says that the soul is the part (division or piece) of the Supreme Soul. If he cannot prove or give any evidence from the Vedas or from any A'rsha Granthas, then that Guru must be treated as ignorant, selfish, fraud, and crook.

Guru is one who leads his disciples to light of truth from the darkness of ignorance. But the Guru, who himself is so ignorant and does not understand himself, how can he explain the profound theories and philosophies of the spiritual world? Such a Guru should take shelter of some true spiritual Guru or Sat-Guru as his disciple who can explain to him the deep subject once again.

O what a pity! These ordinary simpleteous Gurus! You have already made parts of Mother earth, now you are trying to break human hearts and their feelings? You have not even spared God who is infinite and one, but you have divided Him in numerous parts. Poor God! He (God) will be always in parts, be divided into infinite parts, and can never unite to be one till the dissolution of the universe. Creation and dissolution is infinite and endless, so poor God will be divided into infinite parts, then how will He create and deluge the same? How can a soul in human form imagine this impossible thing about His eternal father? All this shows that Guru wants to prove himself as God (because he also is a part of the supreme Soul,) and act as the creator of this vast universe. Yes! Many people often hear these words by some so-called saints saying that they are 'God' and have created this universe. It is a limit for their ego!

One of the laws of motion says: "A thing does not move where it is. It cannot move where it is not. It can move where it is to where it is not." This scientific law is clear that

God does not move whereas the soul (when resides in a body) can move anywhere within its limit.

"Those who remain in ignorance (away from right spiritual knowledge), considering themselves as wise and learned, such fools go, stumbling round and round, by the wrong path, like the blind led by the blind."

(*Kathopanishada* Chapter # 2, sutra # 5)

"May God give wisdom to all, especially all those simpletons Gurus (so called the spiritual teachers, or make other people to call them Guru) who understand the soul is a piece or part or division of the super Soul.

The soul, which is distinct from God, could not be the author of the Universe; for being possessed of finite energy and knowledge and it has no power to build up the cosmos. Hence the soul is different from God.

(*Vedanta Shastra* 1.1.17)

God is second to none and all-pervading conscious entity. He cannot be incarnated or be divided into imaginary parts.

"In the world of good deeds, both the individual soul and the Universal Spirit (God), have entered the supreme secret chamber of the heart enjoying (delighted in) their true self."

(*Kathopanishada* 3.1)

Quest: Is it justified to touch the feet of elderly persons, when they come across or when we visit them?

Justification: There is no objection to touch feet of elderly person, such as mother, father, teachers, spiritual masters and righteous persons. It is a custom in Indian culture to touch the feet of elderly persons to get their blessings if one has a feeling of respect and love for that particular person. But one should not bow down in front of any person or touch their feet unwillingly. No one should also force or compel anyone to touch one's feet. Parents want their child to touch the feet of their Gurus, but if the child doesn't want to do so, they should not force their child. It is parent's duty to make the child understand the

purpose of touching the feet of elderly or learned people.

In touching the feet self-egoism is reduced and one gets the blessing of such elderly educated learned person. The great sage Manu says in Manusmriti (2.9.121) that "He who has a sweet and amiable disposition and serves the wise and old with all his heart, continually gains in knowledge, reputation and strength and enjoys a long life." Whilst he that is otherwise, never advances in knowledge, etc.

"At the beginning and end (of recitation) of the Veda, the teacher's two feet are always to be clasped; he must recite having closed both hands, for that is called homage to the Vedas. (*Manusmriti:* 2.71)

"The clasping of his teacher's (feet) as to be done by him with the hands crossed, the left (foot) is to be touched by the left (hand), the right by the right. (*Manusmriti:* 2.72)

"One should salute him first from whom one gets secular, Vedic, or also transcendental knowledge"

(*Manusmriti:* 2.117)

It is said that one should also touch the feet of, even, Guru's wife. (*Manusmriti* 2.217) says that "Having been from home, he (Disciple), remembering the duty of the good, touch the feet of his Guru's wives, and salute them every day."

"One should not touch feet or even talk to that person who is an atheist, slanderer of the Vedas, who disparages their teachings, as well as the writing of true teachers in conformity of the Vedas. He should be excluded from the society, aye, even expelled out of the country, (if necessary.)" (*Manusmriti:* 2.11)] These people are fraud who themselves sink and even make others sink in the ocean of ignorance. It is a sin to touch their feet or respect these kinds of fraud persons.

Science says that every animate-being (Jiva) is covered with layers of what is called "aura", which transmits some kind of energetic rays. These cosmic rays (auras) have

different colors, depending upon attributes etc. of that particular Jiva. Because of these auras someone looks attractive and attracts others. Likewise someone looks ugly or dispels others from meeting and others also do not like to see even his face.

It is said that some categorized auras attract and different auras repel each other. Because of these energetic rays (aura) some one whom we do not know but we still hate, and at times someone whom we do not know, we feel like getting closer and talking to them. Sattvik people love to have the company of same attributed ones. Rajasik and Tamsik people prefer their own group companies respectively.

"The possession of true ideas of the soul is declared to be an addiction of Sattva. Ignorance betokens Tamas, Passion of love and hatred signify Rajas. These three attributes, i.e., Sattva, Rajas and Tamas of the Prakriti are to be found in all things. Those endowed with Sattva attain to the state of the learned, Godly men. Those, who are possessed of Rajas, become men, while those immersed in Tamas fall into the condition of lower orders."

(*Manusmriti:* 12.29)

In Indian culture it is believed to be a virtuous action to touch the feet of elderly persons. Even in great epics like *"Ramayana and Mahabharata"* super-souls like *Maryaada Purushottam Shri Ram Chandra* and *Yogeshwara Shri Krishna* used to touch the feet of their elders, teachers, saints Rishis, sages etc. One can study and get more descriptions in many places in these books. They performed *"Sandhya and Agnihotra"* everyday. To respect elders and get their blessings are foundation stones of Indian culture and tradition.

Necessity of Food

Food, Sleep, Fear and Sex are the four natural necessities for all animate beings in this animate world. From philosophical point of view all the four topics have many more meanings besides the wordily meanings known to man.

Food:

To maintain physical body one has to eat food supplied by Mother Nature. All animate-beings other that man have natural instinct of the law of nature. There are many animals who are vegetarian by nature and some of them are flesh eaters. They can never ever break the laws of nature as their species are meant to experience the fruits of their deeds done in previous lives. Their digestive systems are made, according to their bodies, in such way that some are vegetarian and some are flesh eaters (Non vegetarians).

Man is said to be a social animal and vegetarian by nature. Being the most superior species in the universe man is a free agent and hence can perform any act whatever he wants according to his capability, power, knowledge and reach. God has created everything for man to enjoy his/her full life with energetic, tasteful and many varieties of fruits, different kinds of vegetables and herbs. But due to blind-faith, blind-beliefs, illiteracy, jungle-customs, misquotes, misunderstandings and circumstances, man has started eating flesh of some mute animals for taste of their tongue. Man is very selfish by nature and when he/she commits any kind of mistakes, bad deeds or even a sin; he/she wants others to do the same to cover his/her evil deeds. In some customs and religions, people have created their imaginary

gods' stories in their ways, just to hide their own sins and to misguide ordinary, ignorant and illiterate people. They want to show that what they do i.e. sinful activities and bad deeds such as to eat animals' flesh and to consume liquor and other inhuman acts, are correct according to the life of that particular gods. Selfish man's gods drink Liquor (Somaras), Wine, Bhaang, Hashish etc. Their deities (gods) do perform Raas-Leelaa (Dance with lovely ladies), etc.

The most important and philosophical meaning of the last one i.e. sex is not just sex but it also be viewed as attraction-repulsion, addition-subtraction, combination-separation, union-division etc.

Why we must remove all non-vegetarian foods including meat, chicken, fish and eggs!

This food putrefies within a few hours and since we are by nature not equipped to pass out excreta in less than 24 hours, the putrefaction takes place within us. We are carrying around decaying corpses within us (we cannot be more graphic) and the delicate lining of the intestines and the colon absorb the resulting toxins. This is the reason that countries where meat is consumed in large quantities have the highest rates of colon cancer.

We wish to live long and be strong and hardworking. Let's learn from nature. The elephant, the bull, the horse (we measure power as horsepower) are all vegetarians. The elephant lives 100 years and more. The lion and all other carnivores on the other hand live only 15 years. The lion is vicious and violent and works hard only to kill for food. The rest of the time he spends sleeping (20 hours per day). Our stomach has to produce a lot more acid to digest these foods. They themselves are very acidic (producing large quantities of uric acid), so anyone suffering from ulcers, arthritis, psoriasis and other skin problems, renal failure, have often not to look far for the cause.

The adrenal glands or stress glands become very active in the animal during captivity and during the butchering

process. The adrenal so produced is recycled to humans thus causing unnecessary panic, stress and fears (many present day psychiatric problems may be attributed to this).

Further, the animals are fed all sorts of hormones and drugs to fatten them up - these are also recycled to humans—and result in severe hormonal disturbances in men and women. Antibiotics are a routine part of their diet. Ingesting these will make us immune to their action should we ever need to use them.

Besides, it makes no sense from the economics and world' food shortage point of view. It takes anywhere between 12 to 20 pounds of vegetable products (as animal feed) to produce one pound of meat (enough only to feed two humans). The water resources on our planet are running out. It takes 60 liters of water to grow 1 kilo of wheat, 200 liters to grow I kilo of green beans, 3000 liters to produce 1 kilo of eggs, 8200 liters to produce 1 kilo of chicken, 16400 liters to produce 1 kilo of pork and 50,000 liters to produce 1 kilo of beef.

Ogalala Water Resource in North America, probably the world's largest underground reservoir of water, was a gift to mankind from the Ice Ages. In a few years it will be completely dry. The rain forests of Africa and South America have been "cleared" to make place for growing grain for cattle for producing hamburgers for the meat eating population of the world. We did not inherit this planet from our forefathers -WE HAVE BORROWED IT FROM OUR FUTURE GENERATIONS! Remember that every time you eat meat, you are permanently destroying this planet. It is indeed horrifying that thousands of gallons of blood and other waste matter from abattoirs are being poured EVERY DAY into rivers all over India.

Could this be one reason for the high incidence of gallstones in young people in all over the world today?

Morally and spiritually, how can we justify killing another animal to satisfy our palate. There is only one God.

He created the animal too and it is to Him that we pray for compassion when we are sick or in trouble. How can we possibly expect compassion from Him when we so ruthlessly and needlessly kill and harm HIS Creation. Think about it!

As for eggs—they rot as fast as meat and fish. Eggs provide the largest quantity of cholesterol. Besides, the unfertilized eggs are virtual chemical factories. The hens are kept in the most shocking conditions - never allowed to roam freely in the sun, always sitting in one position to produce "assembly line" eggs. They are fed hormones (for better produce) and artificial yellow colour (which is one of the worst offenders in children's behavioral disorders) to make the eggs look more appetizing. Unfertilized eggs are nothing but the waste matter of the hen.

That eggs are "nuggets of concentrated nutrition" is a myth that we have swallowed for too long. One egg contains almost zero iron, 1200 IU of Vitamin A, a large quantity of Vitamin D and is loaded with Cholesterol! Compare that to 6000 IU of Vitamin A in a small bunch of drumstick leaves and 10,000 IU in an even smaller bunch of coriander leaves. Both these are also very rich sources of iron (as are all green leafy vegetables). Vitamin D is available from the sun - it is formed directly on the skin by the action of the sun. AND vegetable products do not contain any cholesterol! Most worms, ulcer, arthritis, eczema, asthma, psychiatric, heart, blood pressure, cancer, and kidney cases respond quite dramatically when all non-vegetarian foods are eliminated from the diet.

Pleasure and Pain

"Happiness is spiritual, born of Truth and Love. It is selfish; therefore it cannot exist alone, but requires all mankind to share it."

Everyone in this world desires pleasure and wants to get rid of all possible pains, but it is the law of nature that one who is born has to face pleasure and pain or happiness and sorrow, no matter who he/she is. It is the prime goal of all religions, sects, beliefs to get rid of all pains and acquire pleasures in lives and that is why they come into shelter of 'Dharma", hence the need of true and pure religion.

It makes a difference between worldly beings and enlightened persons. On one side ordinary persons start lamenting when they get pain whereas the enlightened persons like sages, saints and Bhaktas don't bother. They bear the pain smilingly.

We are the doers and the fruit of our actions comes from above, that is from the Benevolent Supreme God. We are free to act but He is to judge our actions and accordingly decides what is best for us. And, therefore, a man of action is never frustrated. Whatever he attains as fruit, he takes it sportingly, because he knows that the success or failures, reward and punishment, pleasure or pain, all of these are given by one who loves us and who affectionately leads us to the path of our good without malice and hatred.

In the Vedic theory *Sukh* and *Dukh* are defined as: "what is with accordance to our senses is called the pleasure or Sukh and that which is not in accordance to our senses is called the pain or Dukh." In simple words what our senses like is Sukh and the opposite of this i.e. what our senses dislike is called the pain.

Mainly there are three kinds of pains: Aadhyatmik, Aadhibhoutik and Aadhidaivik.

Aadhyatmik Dukh is that which is self-created or due to self-negligence or ignorance such as sickness etc. Aadhibhoutik Dukh come because of other animate beings such as dog bite, snakebite or accident due to someone's negligence etc.

Lastly, Aadhidaivik Dukh is one which happens due to natural calamities like excess of heat, cold, rain, drought and flood etc. In these three types of pains, one cannot have control on second and third ones but he/she can have control over the first one i.e. Aadhyatmik pain. If anyone takes full care of himself, he/she can get rid of Aadhyatmik pain.

Causes of Pain:

There are many causes of pleasures and pains but the root cause of pleasure/pain is said to be man's own knowledge/ignorance and his/her karmas respectively.

As stated earlier; there are several causes/factors of pleasures/pains namely: 1. Health/sickness, 2. Wealth/poverty, 3. Homely atmosphere of love and faith between husband and wife, 4. Worthy/Unworthy Children, 5. Good/bad neighbors, 6. Clean/corrupted society, 7. Desirelessness/worldly desires, 8. Knowledge/ignorance, 9. Worship of God/worship of idols and lastly, 10. man's own good/bad karmas (Past and present).

Superstition i.e. blind-faith and false belief also fuels in man's sufferings. A superstitious mind receives no light as it keeps all windows closed and revels in darkness. A mind in darkness is sick mind plagued by myriad superstitions. Thus, notwithstanding one's education and university degrees he/she has not only fallen a prey to a superstitious practice but also promoted darkness. A superstition is a sin and under its spell man fails to rise above darkness of ignorance and remains bereft of the divine light of true knowledge.

If everything is O.K. man enjoys pleasure and if something goes wrong he/she has to face pains. All these factors are equally important. Whenever we are in this world, pain and pleasures are bound to be there with us. But when we are liberated from earthly life and acquire the bliss of God (Moksha) all types of pains will vanish and what remains is only pure pleasure i.e. 'Anand'.

Besides above stated pains, there are more causes of all worldly pains like tension, mental disturbance, migraine, poverty, etc. (Aadhyatmik Dukh). They are invited due to "desires and greeds" which are created by "Ignorance". One must have observed this world being full of pleasure, but worldly pleasures are temporary and many kinds of pains are hidden inside every pleasure. Excess of everything is bad. It is said in the Vedas तेन त्यक्तेन भूञ्जीथा *"Ten Tyakten Bhunjitha"* (Yajurveda 40/1) which means enjoy worldly things without any attachment and greed. Pure pleasure lies in the Bliss of God and that can be acquired only by renunciation of all worldly desires and surrendering everything (even fruits of all karmas) to God.

The Yajurveda: Chapter 40, mantra # 1 says :

ईशा वास्यमिदंꣳसर्वं यत्किञ्च जगत्यां जगत्।
तेन त्यक्तेन भूञ्जीथा मा गृधः कस्य स्विद्धनम्॥

"Isha Vaasyamidam Sarvam Yatkinchat Jagtyaam Jagat"

which means "this Universe that we can see, and whatever exists in this, God pervades all this." It is clear to follow that when the Universe itself is infinite, God who is enveloping it must undoubtedly be infinite. Any religious concept that limits God or its fraction or its phase to any limitation or form, body or volume, surely contradicts the attribute of God being infinite, and therefore is totally against the Vedas and logic and hence is unacceptable. (*Vaisheshika Darshana:* 4.1.3.).

Where there is no cause, there can be no effect"

(Vaisheshika Darshana: 1.2.2.).

Hence pleasures and pains are the results of man's own creation. The most accepted truth is that "As you sow so shall you reap". Do good and you'll get good that is the eternal law of nature.

*"If we are serious, eventually it will be abundantly clear that the fundamental cause of our misery is the constant seeking for contentment outside of ourselves. So the ultimate act of renunciation, which is the direct path to Liberation, is simply the willingness to give up this endless seeking for gratification outside of our own self." (*Andrew Cohen*)

*"The suffering man ought really to consume his own smoke; there is no good emitting smoke till you have made it into fire." (*Thomas Carlyle*)

Removal of pains and acquiring pleasure:

काले नैव यतो वयमेवा यत्

"Kale Naiva Yato Vayameva Yat" (King Bhartrihari) which means, we have not conquered time, but time has conquered us. Hence by utilizing time in a proper manner, we can overcome all sorts of pain from our lives.

Firstly, one has to examine the causes of pains and then try to find out their solution to remove them. Some of the solutions are as follows:

The most important instrument or means of pleasure is our own body through which we experience pleasure. So first of all we have to keep our body fit and healthy and for this one has to obey natural laws, keep their body fit and healthy with daily exercises. Little eating, healthy eating, seasonal eating, regular study of the Vedic literature and lastly, sound sleep keeps body fit. Without healthy and fit body no one can enjoy pleasure.

1. The main and root cause of pain, as said earlier, is self-ignorance due to our own negligence and to remove ignorance one should try to acquire true knowledge. This is possible only by studying the self authoritative or axiomatic

scriptures like the holy Vedas and other religious scriptures called A'rsha Granthas (based on the theories of the Vedas).

2. Wordly desires play main role in increasing or decreasing pleasure or pain. Reduce desires to get rid of many kinds of pains. One, who has negligible desires, always enjoys pleasures and on other hand one who has no control over his desires is always in pain. The Veda makes all humans cautious about their needs/desires.

तेन त्यक्तेन भूञ्जीथा

"Ten Tyakten Bhunjithaa" (Yajurveda: 40/1)
which mean "Enjoy and experience your own earned things but with renunciation. It is also advised in the same Mantra not to greed for anything as all wordily things are instruments for your upliftment and everything belongs to God."

3. One should examine his past and present karmas to find out the mistakes and wrong deeds/karmas already done so that in future he/she do not make the same mistakes to avoid pains. Take a pledge of God that you will not make the same mistakes again. Feel the difference that God is always with you and encourages you continuously.

4. Take shelter of 'Dharma' (real religion) that makes you a perfect person. Dharma means to adopt virtuous attributes, deeds, duties towards you, society, nation and the whole world. Dharma means humanity and vise versa. Dharma or true religion teaches us all good things, duties and attributes including "Activity, Art of living, Cleanliness, Contact, Communion, Compassion, Dedication, Devotion, Education, Efficiency, Exercise, Fame, Faithfulness, Fearlessness, Freshness, Freedom, Forgiveness, Generosity, Gratitude, Glorification, Happiness, Hard-work, Harmony, Helpfulness, Humanity, Humanness, Intelligence, Joy, Kindness, Knowledge, Love, Meditation, Mercy, Non-anger, Non-attachment, Non-greediness, Non-violence, Obedience, Patience, Peace, Positive-ness, Power, Popularity, Prayer, Purity, Renunciation, Respect, Self-examination, Selflessness, Simplicity, Soberness, Spirituality, Strength,

Study, Sweetness, Tolerance, Truth, Unity, Wisdom, Worship and Yoga etc.

5. Guru's company: One must have observed that when someone becomes upset and miserable or suffering from some problem, then he/she goes to some elderly, sensible and educated person to get his/her guidance/advise to get rid of that particular event/ environment. Of course! One who gives guidance and advice is called a Guru. With company of such knowledgeable guru one is bound to be free from miseries, pains. Guru's guidance always works.

6. Virtuous behaviour i.e. humanity is very essential factor for peace of mind that heals pain. Religious people also come across pain and they bear them as gifts of God but the same is not bearable by ordinary people and because of ignorance, they blame God.

7. Worship of God (Simran) really reduces pains of all kind but what is in the destiny (Fruits of the karmas done in previous lives) one has to experience.

8. Obey natural laws to avoid Aadhyatmik and Aadhibhoutik Dukhas and to enjoy life's pleasures.

9. The main cause of all kinds of suffering is our 'Birth'. One has to experience pleasure and pains If he/she takes birth according to his/her previous karmas. If you want to be free from all kinds of pains you have to avoid birth because the Nyaaya Darshana says:

दुःखजन्मप्रवृत्तिदोषमिथ्याज्ञानानाम् उत्तरोत्तरापाए तदनन्तर्रापायादपवर्गः

"Dhuhkha Janma Pravriti Dosha Mithyaajyaanam, Uttarottaraapaaye Tadanantraapaayaadapavarga".

(Nyaaya Shastra 1.22.2)

means: "One can get rid of pain by finding its root cause. The cause of all pain is Ignorance; ignorance is created from false ideas, which are the products of engrossment in sensual gratification and contraction of evil habits, and they too come from consequent immunity from birth and because of birth we suffer all kinds of pain. One can realize that the

main cause of all pain lies in birth alone. If there is no birth, there will be no death, and if one can conquer death all problems of pain will vanish and solved automatically."

10. It's a natural law that "what you give always remains with you. For example teachers give knowledge to students and the same remains with teachers. On the contrary knowledge increases. Donors never become poor, on the contrary they become rich. So distribute pleasure as much as you can and experience the change in your life. You'll be a different person, a fresh person, and with the grace of almighty God you will be one of the happiest persons in the world. That is the only way to receive pleasure and peace of mind. For obtaining anything one has to sacrifice some thing. Isn't it?

11. Sansar Sarpadashta Namekameva Subheshjam, Sarvada Sarvakaleshu Sarvatra Harichintanam.

In this shloka Raja Bhartrihari has said that " in this world, cure for a snakebite is possible, but there is no cure for wordily pain except God's name. To overcome pain in this world, there is only one solution that is — By always remembering God, in every place and in every situation. This is the main "Dharma" i.e. duty of all human beings as God alone can remove our sins. It is common human nature to remember God in the time of difficulties or when they suffer severe pains and/but forget all their pledges when they are O.K. and in pleasure. It is advisable if they want to live happily and in pleasure, they must have faith in God and remember Him in all conditions. Have complete faith in yourself and full trust in God who alone is the source of true and pure pleasure i.e. bliss. One remains in divine pleasure away from all types of pains in His Company.

वेदाहमेतं पुरुषं महान्तमादित्यवर्णं तमसः परस्तात्।
तमेव विदित्वाति मृत्युमेति नान्यः पन्था विद्यतेऽयनाय॥

"Vedahametam Purusham Mahantamaadity- avarnam Tamasah Parastat, Tameva Viditwati Mrityometi Nanya Panthaa Vidyate~Yanaya" (Yajurveda: 31/18)

"I know the Supreme Soul, Ishwara (God), bright as the light of the sun, dispeller of the darkness of the world and of the ignorance of the soul, beyond all darkness, eternally free from it. Having known that only does man cross the suffering of the world and conquer even death. "There is no other path to freedom and bliss."

Original or/and Subordinate attributes!

There are two kinds of attributes viz. Original or Natural (Swaabhaavik) and Subordinate or external (Naimittik). The original attributes are those which always remain with the substance and the subordinate attributes are those which are collected or influenced externally by the substance and can be detached or separated.

For example: The original attribute of water is coolness, but when heated, it absorbs heat and becomes hot. This hotness of water is called the external or subordinate attribute of water.

Many people think that pleasures and pains are in-built or original/natural attributes of the soul, so they cannot be thrown away. This is their wrong perception and thinking because pleasure and pain are subordinate/external attribute.

For a while we presume that pains are in-built, original, or natural attributes of the soul then there is no use to get rid of them as they are intact to the soul and can never be separated. But reality is different, one can really get rid of these worldly pains to some extent according to his/her efforts. Otherwise it would not have been said in the Yogsutra that—

हेयं दुःखमानागतम्

"Heyam Dhukhamanaagatam" (Saadhan-Pada: 16) which means "The future suffering can and must be avoided." The Science through which this is possible is called Yoga.

The Goal of Human Life

The goal of human iife is to attain complete happiness or Emancipation, which is possible only when one realises the Self and visualises God. God is not a worldly thing that can be seen with our fleshy eyes but He is experienced by the soul with pure mind.

Of course! God is within us and we are within God, yet we are searching Him outside us. We search Him in Mandirs, in Masjids, in Gurudwaras and in Churches. This search is not complete, it continues and we search Him on mountains, on the banks of rivers and in jungles, but God is not visualised. Why?

Of the innumerable number of species existing on the earth, the human species is said to be the most developed. Nature has conferred upon this exquisite species of hers the most productive brain. It is the only one which can at times turn inward, go back into its own depth and search out wonderful things. Our Vedic Scriptures and/or A'rsha Shastras go a step further and mark out human birth to be a most precious and rare achievement. This is because the human body is the only medium through which one can attain salvation -realisation of the real nature of the Self - the ultimate aim of human life.

In the real nature of our Self, we (souls) are divine and immortal. We are not a body; the body is the machine or instrument through which we work. It is made of the gross elements of nature (earth, water, fire, air and ether) and therefore is bound to perish. (It is an eternal law of nature that anything that is made is to perish in the end.) But, with the destruction of our body, we are not going to lose our identity for we are not the body. We are souls, the Atma,

which are numerous. The Atma is eternal, immortal, pure, divine and even free. Never was the Atma born and hence never shall it die. "The Atma" says the Lord Krishna in the Geeta, "Never is born nor dies. It is not that it comes to exist and thereafter loses its existence. Neither is it that loses its existence and comes to exist again. The Atma is Birth-less, Eternal and Ancient. It does not perish even on the destruction of the body". Realizing this immortal nature of ours, all fear of death ceases and thus in turn ceases all our miseries, sorrows and woes. We no more keep ourselves busy in the futile efforts to make our existence last long, for immortal we are in our real nature. We come to know that we existed in the past; we exist, as it is self-evident, at present; we shall exist in the future. In other words we exist eternally.

This is the aim of human life - to become free from the clutches of worldly pleasures and pains and attain Emancipation. Then and only then does this human life become perfect. To transcend the body, the senses, the mind, ego and all other things of this mortal universe is the goal of human life and it is only achievable while remaining in this human body. No other body however grand it might be, is fit to achieve this state.

We, the souls, are the masters of our own senses, thoughts and desires. They then carry out our orders and not we theirs. Success and failure, joy and sorrow and all such extremes become alike for us. They lose their capacity to affect one who has transcended the mortal elements. Seeing the same Atma or Self in everything we are no more frightened by anything, for where is any "other" to frighten us? "The realised one having attained the sameness, sees the Atma in everything and everything in the Atma".

(Srimad Bhagvad Geeta).

It is the phenomenon of nature to draw us to her side and make us react to diverse happenings. And as we do so, we become restless. We lose the balance of our mind. But in

order to enjoy perfect peace we must have equanimity, which is only possible, if we remain totally undisturbed by the phenomenon around us. But this calls for total control on our nature. It is only the master and not the slave who can exercise control. And to be the master of our nature we must transcend it. To know the phenomenal world we have to transcend the phenomenal world. Having transcended the world of manifoldness, one gains perfect control over oneself. And he who has controlled himself, has controlled the whole universe, for "Whatever is in microcosm is in the macrocosm".

Having achieved this, being the master of his own destiny one enjoys things as they come, being perfectly unperturbed by them and thus enjoys perfect peace and happiness. Being in this body he become immortal, not as the body but as the Atma. He enjoys tranquillity and ecstasy even whilst living in this body. "One who has controlled his mind, who is free from attachment and envy, enjoying things by his controlled senses, enjoys eternal Bliss"

(Shrimad Bhagvad Geeta)

Happiness is said to be the most important thing in this world by which one can be examined of his/her success.

Human species is the most precious one hence to waste time in worldly desires is useless. The ultimate goal of human being is to realise himself where there is existence of God too. This is possible only in human species.

Vedic Theories and Beliefs

Important

The four Vedas -The Rig, Yajur, Sam and Atharvaveda, are the foundation of "Dharma" or "Humanity". They contain all true knowledge and sciences in root form useful for mankind. Besides these the Rishi Granthas — scriptures written by ancient seers on the basis of Vedic theories, contain — Four Brahmans, Four Upavedas, Six Darshanas, Ten Upanishads and Six Vedangas which also explain the philosophies of the Vedas in detail.

(1) The Vedic Dharma believes in One God who is Existent, Intelligent and is Blissful. He is Formless, Omnipotent, Just, Kind, Unborn, Endless, Unchangeable, Beginningless, Unequalled, the supporter of all, the Lord of all, Omnipresent, Immanent, Un-aging, Immortal, Fearless, Eternal, Holy and Creator of the Universe. He alone should be communed with. The Vedic Dharma does not believe in idol worship, it believes only in worshiping Omnipresent God who is formless.

(2) The Vedic Dharma" is the oldest Dharma compared to other religions, sects and beliefs in the world. It is in existence since the beginning of the Universe i.e. from 1,96,08,53,0100 years.

(3) All other religions, Sects, beliefs etc. are started by some gurus, teachers, saints, messengers andsc. but "the Vedic Dharma" is revealed by God and not by any human being.

(4) God, Prakriti and an infinite number of infinitesimal souls are three eternal entities. This eternal "Trinity" is the basis of creation. (Rigveda: 1.164.20, 1.164.44, and 10.5.7)

(5) God and the souls are conscious and formless hence they are invisible. The matter i.e. Prakriti (material cause on the universe) is dead inert (insensate object = Jada) matter which changes its Subtle-form to 'Srishti'. The Prakriti is the cause of its effort called Srishti. Being an inert, insensate and dead matter, the Prakriti cannot do anything by itself. With the influence of the Super Soul "God", Srishti is created. God makes laws of the nature. Creation and deluge (dissolution of the universe) are beginningless and endless.

(*Rigveda:* 1.164.38; *Atharvaveda:* 10.8.25 and 13.1.6)

(6) God is one without a second. The souls are infinite in numbers. For a man they are infinite but in God's knowledge they are finite. The souls do not die or take birth, their number remains constant. They cannot be increased or decreased, because they are eternal.

(*Atharvaveda:* 10.8.26; *Rigveda:* 6.9.4, 6.9.5)

(7) The time period for existence of the universe is said to be 4,32,00,00,000 years, this consists of 14 Manvantaras. "God creates, sustains and dissolves the Universe like previous ones". "Yathaa Purvarnakalpayat" (Rigveda: 10-160-3). Each Manvantara is fixed for 71 Chaturyugas and each Chaturyug, which consists of four Yugas namely, Sat-Yuga (17,28,000 years), Treta-Yuga (12,96,000 years), Dwapar-Yuga (8,64,000 years) and Kali-Yuga (4,32,000 years). When combined four Chaturyugis become 43,20,000 years.

[Important: 14 Manvantaras multiplied by 71 Chaturyugs = 994. The Vedic philosophy explains that 1000 Chaturyugis make one creation, which is, called 'The day of Braahm'. That means Six Chaturyugis is the actual time period of creation, i.e. from creation of the first atom to man on earth. Likewise when deluge takes place it takes the same time i.e. Six Chaturyugs. The time of deluge (Pralaya) is said to be "Night of Braahm".]

(*Manusmriti:* Chapter: 1, Aphorism 1 to 8)

(8) As mentioned earlier creation exists for the period

of 4,32,00,00,000 i.e. 432 millions years and the same period of time is fixed for deluge (i.e. dissolution of the creation). The emancipated soul enjoys the bliss of God for the period of 31,10,40,00,00,00,000 i.e. 3110.4 trillions years. That is the time of Salvation, which is equal to 36000 times of the creation and dissolution of the universe is also called "Parant-kaal". (432 x 2 = 864 x 36000 = 3110.4 trillions year). In the state of Emancipation, the soul can travel anywhere in the Universe and gain more knowledge plus it can enjoy anything with its innate powers. After enjoying the bliss of God, the soul has to return to this world to experience the remaining Karma-Phal.

(9) The collections of four books, viz., Rig, Yajur, Sama and Atharva Veda, which have been revealed by God contain true knowledge, are the "Vedas". People learn what is true and what is not true from these "Vedas".

(10) The Vedas are "Swatah pramanas" i.e. axiomatic. They are self-authoritative and repositories of all sciences because they are the word of God, and possess the quality of eternalness. (*Vedanta:* 1.3.29 *"Ata eva cha Nityam"*).

They are eternal because they remain unchanged through all ages; No other proof is admissible to prove the authoritativeness of the Vedas. Other proofs only serve as auxiliary or corroborative evidence. (Yajurveda: 10.8).

There are two kinds of knowledge contained in the Vedas i.e. Paraa and Apara Vidya. The Vedas are called "Chhandas" because they remove suffering and cover (man) with happiness. *(Rigvedaadi Bhaashya Bhumikaa)*

Being the word of God the four Vedas are eternal and true knowledge for mankind. In the Vedas, there is full knowledge required by the soul, required for emancipation. God is Omniscient and infinite in knowledge whereas the soul is infinitesimal entity hence has finite capacity to acquire knowledge. Both are conscious entities.

(11) The human species is said to be in the "Bhoga-Yoni and Karma-Yoni" (It is also said to be Yoga-Yoni)

whereas all other species are said to be in the "Bhoga Yoni". That is why the human race is the best because only in this specie man can acquire wisdom through Vedic knowledge revealed by God, which ends in emancipation of the soul. In state of salvation the soul (with its natural attributes) experiences the bliss of God. After completion of the period of salvation he returns to the world and is reborn in the human race.

[According to our earthly time, the period of emancipation is 31,10,40,00,00,00,000 years i.e. "Paranta-kaal, which is 36000 times the period of creation and dissolution of the universe.]

(12) The soul cannot act nor do anything without the help of physical body and vise-versa. The body is his (soul's) instrument for doing actions and without it the soul cannot have actualization of the Self and realisation of God. Ghosts, Holy ghosts, Bad omens, and Spirits, Rascals, Fear of the dead, fairies etc. are imaginary things. They do not exist at all. The soul resides in one body at one time. [In pregnancy two souls live in the body of the mother but yet both the souls live in their different bodies.]

(*Atharvaveda:* 10.8.28; *Rigveda:* 6.47.18)

[No soul can enter in a dead body once he has left it. No soul can enter any other body with his wish and will. The soul gets a new body (birth) with the grace of God according to his (soul's) residential tendencies and fruits of his actions done in past life.

(13) It is a belief in many communities in many parts of the world that ghosts and souls enter in some one's body and makes him/her suffer in different ways and many people so called 'witchcraft removers' make huge money in this blind faith business. Weak minded and ignorant people get entangled easily in the claws of these fraud witchcraft. All this is because of illiteracy and negligence towards the study of the true religious books like Vedas and Vedic literature.

(14) The things made from Prakriti are insensate

objects and can be visible and invisible because of their subtle form. The matter can never do anything by itself. The movement in nature is due to inspiration of the "Purusha" i.e. conscious entities. (There are two conscious entities — God and the soul). Prakriti being dead inert matter, can never acquire the attributes of conscious, like eating, drinking laughing, weeping, walking, talking andc. hence idols cannot eat, drink, laugh, weep, walk, talk etc. Idol worshippers are nihilists and atheists.

(15) The laws of nature are called "Ritta" i.e. eternal and unchangeable. One who is born has to die one day. Any thing created will perish. Created universe will dissolve. One who has come must go. Where there is beginning, there must be an end. No one knows the exact time, place, condition (i.e. when, where and how) of one's death and birth. Birth after death and death after birth, day after night and night after day, creation after deluge and deluge after creation, nothing is stable except God. God is "Dhruva".

(16) Dead body is to be exhumed in fire (cremated). The dead body then dissolves in its subtle elements i.e. in its causes, It is scientific and the correct method that the dead bodies should be exhumed in fire. After 'Antyeshti' no rituals are to be done for the departed soul.

(17) Impossible things can never/ever become possible and likewise the possible things can never/ever become impossible. No one, Even God who is Omnipotent, Omnipresent and Omniscient, cannot change or alter His laws of nature once made in the beginning of this cycle of the Universe. "In this cycle as in the previous ones"

"Yathapurvamakalpayat" (Rigveda: 10.190.1). The soul is eternal, beginningless, imperishable, everlasting and pure. (Atharvaveda: 10.8.26) (Rigveda: 6.9.4, 6.9.5).

God is All-knowing that means He knows everything, then who can ask Him to alter or change the laws once He has made lready in the beginning of the Universe? If He alters or changes His self-made laws every now and then,

that shows that He may be something else not Omniscient God.

(18) Every action has its reaction. [Action and reaction are equal and opposite.] Bad actions and good actions result in bad and good reactions. Re-birth depends upon the impressions of these (bad or good) actions and 'resident tendencies' of past infinite lives, under the guidance of the Supreme Soul. God gives the fruits of one's actions by the way of "Life-state, Life-period and Life—experience" i.e.

सति मूले तद्विपाको जात्युर्भोगाः

"Sati Moole Tadvipaako Jaatyaayurbhogaahaa"

(Yog Darshan: 2/13)

"Jaati-Aayu-Bhog". One has to experience 'Pleasure and Pain', 'Good and Evil', 'Virtue and Vice', Rewards and Punishments', Desirable and Undesirable', Helpful and Unhelpful'. 'Appreciatory and derogatory, according to his good and bad actions. Man alone is responsible for his good or bad actions. The consequences of all actions have to be experienced by the doer at some point in time. Actions are seeds and fruits are its efforts, hence what you sow, shall you reap. What happens to us is the direct result of our actions. We are responsible for our actions hence it is we who have to deal with their consequences. There is no excuse as this is an eternal law of Almighty God. No one can avoid this law. Whether it is good or bad action, once it is done, the results are never lost. The consequences arise accordingly and spring out their fruits when the time is ripe. By doing spiritual practice (Octapartite Yogic practice) to gradually untie the knots of our 'Sanskaras' which are the main cause of birth and death, hence pain and complications in our life. This is theory of 'Karma'.

(19) God is one without a second. He if Infinite. "Tasya Vachakah Pranava" which means "Pranava" (the syllable 'OM') is His appellation. 'Pranava' signifies God. God's personal and the best name known to all is nothing but "AUM" which is pronounced as OM, who is Formless,

Infinite and Omnipresent. God is called by hundreds of different names, such as God, Allah, Khuda, Rabba etc. by virtue of possessing manifold natures, attributes and characteristics. There is no objection whatsoever if any one takes any of His names, but according to the Vedic philosophy and other authoritative literatures the best name of Almighty God is said to be "AUM".

(20) The Supreme Soul (God) is not obtained by eloquent speeches or by intellect, brainpower, (or arguments), or by listening (of sermons or Holy Scriptures). But only he whom this Supreme Soul chooses, obtains (knows or realises) Him, and for him He illumines His real form. Ignorance, nescience, darkness are the causes of pain and bondage. Knowledge, education, light is means for salvation, which is the prime object of man's life.

(21) Thorough knowledge, action and communion with God, all three are essential for attaining 'Moksha' i.e. Emancipation. Only knowledge, action or worshipping God is not enough for attaining salvation. When a man becomes free from all the desires lodging in his heart, he attains immortality, i.e. 'Moksha', being freed from pains of repeated birth and death, and in that stage he enjoys Supreme Bliss in the company of God. On realizing Him (God) alone one passes beyond death, and there is no other path known for attaining 'Moksha' (i.e. for being free from the circle of births and deaths). [Shvetashvtar Upanishad: chapter III, aphorism VIII]

(22) Thinking, talking, listening, acting, all impressions are registered on one's mind inputs. These impressions are called 'Sanskaras' or "Residential tendencies" that make grooves on the mind. They dwell so deep that one is compelled to react accordingly. Hence one should keep careful watch over his thoughts because they only develop the right attitude, which result in new actions for our good. There are "Sixteen Vedic Sanskaras" that are to be essentially performed and acquired by all human beings.

These 'Vedic-Sanskaras' start from 'Garbhadhan to Antyeshti' that is from before birth to after death.

(23) There is no gain or effect of so called Magic, Witchcraft, Thread (Dora), Taveez, Yantra, Mantra, Tantra, Teekaa, Tilak, Garland, Finger-ring, Precious Stone, Ash (Bhabhuti) etc. Of course! Mantra-power certainly affect man IF properly pronounced, meditated upon, understood with their significance in mind, the soul is not shaken but concentrates on God. Recitation preferably in the mind and consideration of the true meaning of mantra gives power by which one is able to achieve his goal. Whatever one shall desire, it shall be his i.e. his reasonable desire shall be fulfilled. Only repetition of mantra does not give any special reward. Of course! Mantra will be remembered.

(24) There are no places in the universe like "Heaven and Hell". Of course! These are the creation by selfish, fraud, and mentally retarded people. "Heaven" is a state in which the 'Jiva' experiences unique happiness since in heaven means of happiness are supple unto the 'Jiva'. "Hell" is the state in which the 'Jiva' is unusually tormented through instruments of torture. Heaven and hell exist in this world only.

(25) One possessed of divine nature, attributes and characteristics are called "Devataa"[30] (Deity). Feminine gender of 'Devataa' is "Devi". According to Vedic philosophy there are thirty-three Devataa or prominent demigods. The greatest of all Devataa is God that is why He is called the greatest Devataa of all Devataa —Mahadevaa.

Mahar'shi Dayananda Saraswati has written in his immortal book "Light Of Truth" (Satyarth Prakash) — "Whatsoever or whosoever possesses useful and brilliant qualities is called a Devataa, as the earth for instance; but it is no-where said that it is God or the object of our adoration. Even in mantra (Rigveda 1-164-39) it is said that He, who is the sustainer of all the Devataa, is the adorable God, and is worthy of being sought after. They are greatly mistaken who

take the word Devataa to mean God."

यस्य त्रयस्त्रिंशद्देवा अङ्गे सर्वेसमाहिता।
स्कम्मं तं ब्रूहि कतमः स्विदेव सः॥

"Yasya Trayastrinshad Devaa Ange Sarve Samaahitaa, Skamma Tam Bruhi Katamah Swideva Sah".

(Atharva Veda 10-7-13)

Which means: with God's influence, these thirty-three demigods sustain the world. They are: 8-Vasu, 11-Rudra, and 12-Aaditya, 1-Indra and 1-Prajaapati.

8 Vasus: Earth, Water, Fire, Air, Ether, Moon, Sun, and Star. They are called Vasus, because they are abode of all that lives, moves or exists.

11 Rudras: The ten Pranas (Praana, Apaana, Vyaana, Samaana, Udaana, Naag, Kurma, Krikal, Devadutta and Dhananjaya) i.e. nervauric forces which live in the human body. The eleventh is the human soul. These are called 'Rudras' because when they desert the body, it becomes dead and the relations of the deceased, consequently, begin to weep. Rudra means one who makes a person weep.

12 Adityaas —the twelve months of a year called Adityaas, they cause the lapse of the term of existence of each object or being.

1 Indra which is also known as the (all-pervading) electricity, as it is productive of great force.

1 Prajaapati , also called the "Yajna" because it benefits mankind by the purification of air, water, rain and vegetables and because it aids the development of various arts, and in it the honor is accorded to the learned and the wise.

त्रया देवाऽएकादश त्रयस्त्रिꣳशाः सुराधसः।
बृहस्पतिपुरोहिता देवस्य सवितुः सवे। देवा देवैरवन्तु मा॥

"Trayaa Devaa Ekaadasha--Devaa Devairantu Maa"

(Yajurveda 20/11)

"Yasya Trayastrishaddevaa—Brahavido Viduhu"

(Atharvaveda 10-7-27)

"Trayastrishddevataastreeni—Krinavad Veeryaani"
(Atharvaveda 19-27-10)
"Yasya Trayastinshad Devaa—Swideva Sah"
(Atharvaveda 10-7-13)

ये त्रिंशति त्रयस्परो देवासो बर्हिरासदन्।
विदन्नह द्वितासनन्॥
"Ye Trinshati Trayasparo Devaaso Bahirraasadan"
(Rigveda 8-28-1)

ये स्थ त्रयश्च त्रिंशच्च
"Ye Stha Trayashcha Trinshacch" (Rigveda 8-30-2)

विश्वे देवास्त्रय एकादशासः
"Vishve Devaastraya Ekaadashah" (Rigveda 9-92-4)

गिर्वणस्त्रयस्त्रिंशतमा वह
"Girvana Trayastrinshatamaa Vahaa"
(Rigveda 1-45-2)

पत्नीवतस्त्रिंशतं त्रींश्च देवाननुष्वधमा वह मादयस्व
"Patneevatastrishatam Treenshcha Devaan"
(Rigveda 3-6-9)

All the above said Vedic mantras say that there are 33* Devataas [*Not 330 million as Hindus believe. Because there is any proof at all] by virtue of possessing useful and brilliant properties and qualities. Being Lord of all and greater than all, the Supreme Being "GOD" is called the thirty-fourth Devataa who alone is to be worshipped.

(26) The best 'Siddhi' (the psychic power) of eight accessories of the 'Yoga' is "Bliss of God". Bliss of God is experienced by the soul, in which all types of pain perish. In the state of emancipation all pains are absolutely perished. (Rigveda: 10.5.5) (Atharvaveda: 10.2.26, 10.2.27, and 10.2.30)

(27) Yes! Miracles happen but not in the sense as most people usually understand.

There exist no "Miracles" and can never exist. The

laws of nature are eternal therefore nothing can go against it. The impossible can and will never be possible. It is a blind-faith to believe anything; you listen, without any proof. One only gets darkness with blind-faith and can never acquire light. Always trust in God. "One wrong step may lead to a great fall." "If God is our defence, who is against us"?

When an ignorant person becomes intelligent and virtuous by educating himself with Vedic literatures and religious books, this is a really miracle! There happens a perceptible change in the devotee's personality, his life style, his thoughts, words and actions. A true devotee never has a negative approach. He develops a positive thinking and a positive approach towards everything. He is always optimistic, cheerful and fearless and does everything with excellence and with a smile. Such a person never tires or retires from his life. On the contrary he lives a life of joyful bliss and fully enjoys every second of his life in the service of humanity. Is all this less than a miracle?

(28) "Incarnation of God" is the theory of fools. God does not incarnate and can never/ever incarnate Himself. He who believes in incarnation of God is a sort of an atheist. An atheist will never become happy in his life. God is Formless, Ajanma and Akaaya. "Na Tasya pratimaasti" means God is devoid of any form shape or colour as He is Omnipresent, Omniscient and Omnipotent.

(29) "Re-birth" is essential for creation; otherwise there is no use for the Universe. Fruits of one's actions are not possible in one birth. To experience the consequences of past lives, one has to take birth (which ripens into "Life-state, Life-time and Life-experience" i.e. "Jaati-Aayu-Bhog". Patanjali's Yoga- Chapter II, Sutra 13 ("Sati moole Tadvipaako Jatyayurbhogahah") with the grace of God. According to philosophy of the Vedic-Dharma, the theory of "Re-Birth" is said to be perfect and scientific. (Rigveda: 6.47.18) (Yajurveda: 4.15) (Atharvaveda: 10.8.27, 10.8.28, and 11.4.6)

(30) Real Worship: No form of idol worship is permissible in the Vedas in place of the real God. The worship of the five living Gods is essential duty of every man, because it is sanctioned by the Holy Vedas. This may be termed worship of Gods that are truly worthy of reverence. They are 1: mother, 2: father, 3: teacher (Guru), 4: learned guests, and 5: husband for his wife and wife for her husband. These are the five living Gods who bring a man into being and bring him up, and it is through them that he gains true knowledge, sound culture and is instructed into the righteous principles of conduct. It is the worship of these that leads one to God. Whoever does not worship them and worships idols instead is a transgressor of Vedic principles.

(31) No rituals (Shradha) of the deceased are done, because they get the "Life-state, Life-time and Life-experience" according to their deeds and Sanskaras of infinite lives, under the guidance of the Supreme Soul i.e. God. No one can change or alter someone's destiny. God is Almighty and Just; no one can ever influence God in His works.

(32) Ganga, Yamuna, Saraswati, Sindhu, Jhelam, Bias, Krishna, Godavari, Kaveri, Thames and Mississippi river are not 'Tirthas or Holy Places'. By taking a bath in these rivers impurities of the body can be removed but impurities of the mind and souls are removed only by the "Light of truth" i.e. The true and Eternal knowledge of the Vedas. It is sheer blind faith to think that one gets emancipation and gets rid of all evils, when he/she takes bath in these rivers on some auspicious days like Ekaadashi, Purnima, Umavasya etc. Of course! It's possible that some of the skin diseases can be cured when bathing in some natural springs and /or fountains that contain herbs and some medical properties.

(33) One can never be freed without experiencing the fruits of his actions. Actions rest only after giving their fruits to the doer. All pious acts like the acquisition of knowledge, noble thoughts, divine worship, religious

ceremonies, love for truth, continence, control over senses, etc. are veritable places of pilgrimage since the performance of these goodly acts can take one beyond the sea of sorrow. Study of the Vedas, company of the learned, service to mankind, 'Nishkaam Karmas', worship, glorification and prayer of Almighty God by octapartite (Eight Steps) Yoga one is emancipated from the bondage of birth and death for the 'Parant-kaal' i.e. the period of 31,10,40,00,00,00,000 years. This is real 'Tirtha' i.e. the holy place of the soul.

(34) No one can grasp God, the great Glorious Supreme Being, from above or across or in the middle (from any side), for He has no form. No one can see Almighty God with physical eyes, for He is not the subject of light. One who realizes Him in his/her clean heart (with faith and devotion) and concentrated mind, becomes immortal (free from the circle of birth and death), i.e. attain 'Moksha' (emancipation or salvation).

(35) Sanskar is that which contributes to the physical, mental and spiritual improvement of man hence the body, soul and mind of man is purified with the Sixteen Vedic Sanskaras, e.g. Naam-karan, Yajyopaveeta etc. It is the duty of all men to perform the sixteen Sanskaras or sacraments.

(36) It is an essential duty of every person to perform the "Panch-Maha-Yajnas" daily. There are five great Yajnas namely: 1. Brahma Yajna, 2. Dev Yajna, 3. Pitri Yajna, 4. Bhoot Yajna and 5. Atithi Yajna (Manu Smriti: 3-70).

(37) The natural laws are found to be the same according to the Vedic theories and vise versa whereas other so called Religions or sects differ from the scientific truths as well as the laws of nature.

(38) No one is untouchable from his/her birth. On the contrary the Untouchables are those who are dirty (physically, mentally and verbally), he/she may be Brahmans or sweepers etc. All human beings are equal at birth but according to their Karmas they are divided in to four Varnas or sects such as 1: Brahmana, 2: Kshatriya, 3: Vaishya and 4: Shudras.

(39) Individually, the life is divided into four sections called "the Ashramas" e.g. Brahmacharya (from childhood to the age of 25 years), Grihast-ashram (from 25 to 50 years), Vaanaprasth-ashram (from 50 to 75 years) and Sanyas-ashram (from 75 years onwards upto death).

(40) One should respect their living parents (mother and father), Guru, the learned enlightened people by serving them proper food, clothes, money and everything they want. This is called "the Shradha". Giving some money, food etc. to some Brahmans, pundits in the memory of the departed parents and elderly family persons is blind-faith, unjust and non-Vedic deeds.

(41) Actualisation, Activity, Cleanliness, Contact, Communion, Dedication, Devotion, Education, Effort, Efficiency, Exercise, Fame, Faithfulness, Fearlessness, Freshness, Freedom, Forgiveness, Generosity, Gratitude, Glorification, Happiness, Hard-work, Harmony, Helpfulness, Humanity, Independence, Justice, Kindness, LOVE, Mercy, Name, Non-anger, Non-attachment, Non-greediness, Non-stealing, Non-violence, Obedience, Patience, Peace, Positivity, Power, Popularity, Prayer, Purity, Renunciation, Respect, Self-examination, Selflessness, Simplicity, Soberness, Spirituality, Strength, Study, Sweetness, Tolerance, TRUTH, Unity, Wisdom, Worship, Yoga etc. are some of the important virtues that lead to the destination-God.

LOVE IS GOD

* Love is God and God is love.

* Truth is God and God is truth.

We can say that love is truth and truth is love. Love means Sacrifice. God sacrifices for the benefit of upliftment of all creatures. Its teaching that we also make sacrifice for the benefit of others. Love all and love God. Love is the Centre of the universe. No one can survive without love. Love is everything. If you love, you'll be loved.

Love is like Nectar.

If you want to realise God, love all and then experience your acualisation and visualisation of God everywhere. Love is essence of God. The entire Universe is a place to love because God pervades everywhere. Love is another name for religion. Religions require love but love does not require any religion. Spiritual development redirects the self towards the truth i.e. love. Indeed Love is Truth and truth is love. Love is immortal that cannot die or be created.

Love is such a currency that can be used in all places. It is useful to open the doors of heaven and enter the kingdom of God. Love and love alone can make us reach the heavens and get the immeasurable grace of God. Supreme Soul is made of love and we are also made of the same love. God and the soul being two different entities but both are eternal and conscious. Always look for faults in yourself. The root of all evil is in you. Don't blame others, but clean your own heart and purify yourself.

Life is Life—Elevate it!

* Life is Love—Love it.

* Life is Trust—Believe it.

* Life is Real—Experience it.

* Life is Game—Play it.
* Life is Book —Read it.
* Life is Ocean —Cross it.
* Life is War —Conquer it.
* Life is Journey —Travel it.
* Life is Duty —Perform it.
* Life is Religion —Adopt it.
* Life is Sweet —Taste it.
* Life is Nectar —Drink it.
* Life is Challenge —Accept it.
* Life is Friend —Meet it.
* Life is Wife —admire it.
* Life is Lamp —Lit it.
* Life is Light —Brighten it.
* Life is Joy —Zap it.
* Life is Contract —sign it.
* Life is Business —Do it.
* Life is TV —Watch it.
* Life is Temple —Respect it.
* Life is Newspaper —Read it.
* Life is Vehicle —Drive it.
* Life is Fragrance —Smell it.
* Life is Examination —Pass it.
* Life is Problem —Solve it.
* Life is Mystery —Explore it.
* Life is Suspense —Discover it.
* Life is Question —Answer it.
* Life is Answer —Quest it.
* Life is Beauty —Admire it.
* Life is Knowledge —Acquire it.
* Life is everything —Grab it.
* Life is Divine —worship it.
* Life is Bliss and Blessing —Attain it and Feel it.
* Life is God's Gift —Must Adore it.

India. So far forty articles on various subjects have been published in "**Nishkaam Parivartan**". He is very practical and enthusiastic person, never adjusts with untruth and non-justice issues, a strong believer of the Vedic Dharma, believes in self, believes in God. His first Book in Hindi named "**Shanka Samadhan**" is really marvelous and wonderful, in which Shri Madan Raheja has answered 131 frequently asked questions about religion and related subjects. It is the result of his practice of daily studies of the Vedic literatures and interest in the Vedic Dharma. His subsequent books "**Andhvishwas Nirmoolan**" and "**Quest the Vedic Answers**" became extremely popular and were widely accepted.

I not only hope but am sure that the latest English book written by Shri Madan Raheja, will lead, all those who are inquisitive to acquire the true knowledge of Vedas. May God give him more courage and vigor so that in future also he will give his service for the benefit of the mankind.

Cap. Dev Ratna Arya
(President Sarvdeshik Arya Pratinidhi Sabha -Delhi)

Back to the Vedas

In this era of information and technology, Mr. Madan Raheja's book 'Back to the Vedas' serves a valuable digest providing authentic information on a number of subjects related to human life from birth to re-birth.

The encyclopaedic treatment of various subjects, like *dharma and religion, God, soul and matter, karma siddhanta, Astrology and Astronomy, Vedic sanskaras, yoga and meditation, doctrine of incarnation, worship of God, goal of human life*, Vedic theories and beliefs etc., in a self-contained manner makes the reading of the book more interesting and absorbing.

Mr. Raheja's analytical approach serves as a very valuable and important guide to the mass of Vedic information and knowledge contained in the Vedas. Not only does 'BACK TO THE VEDAS' enlighten the reader but also dispels many superstitions and mistaken notions and can be regarded as an irreplaceable spiritual guide for and all in every family and society for attaining peace, happiness and enlightenment.

- Prof. P.L. Bhola